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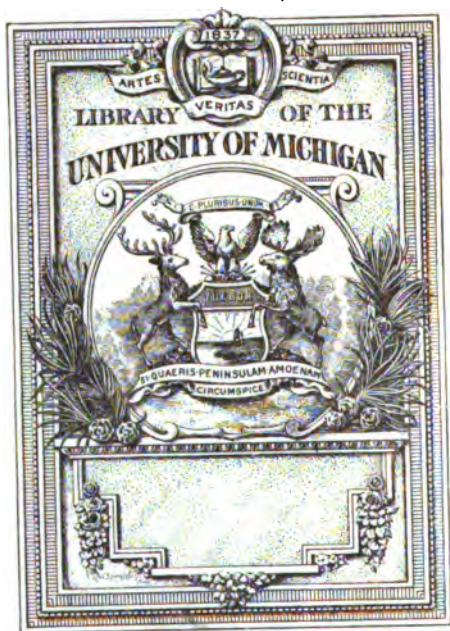
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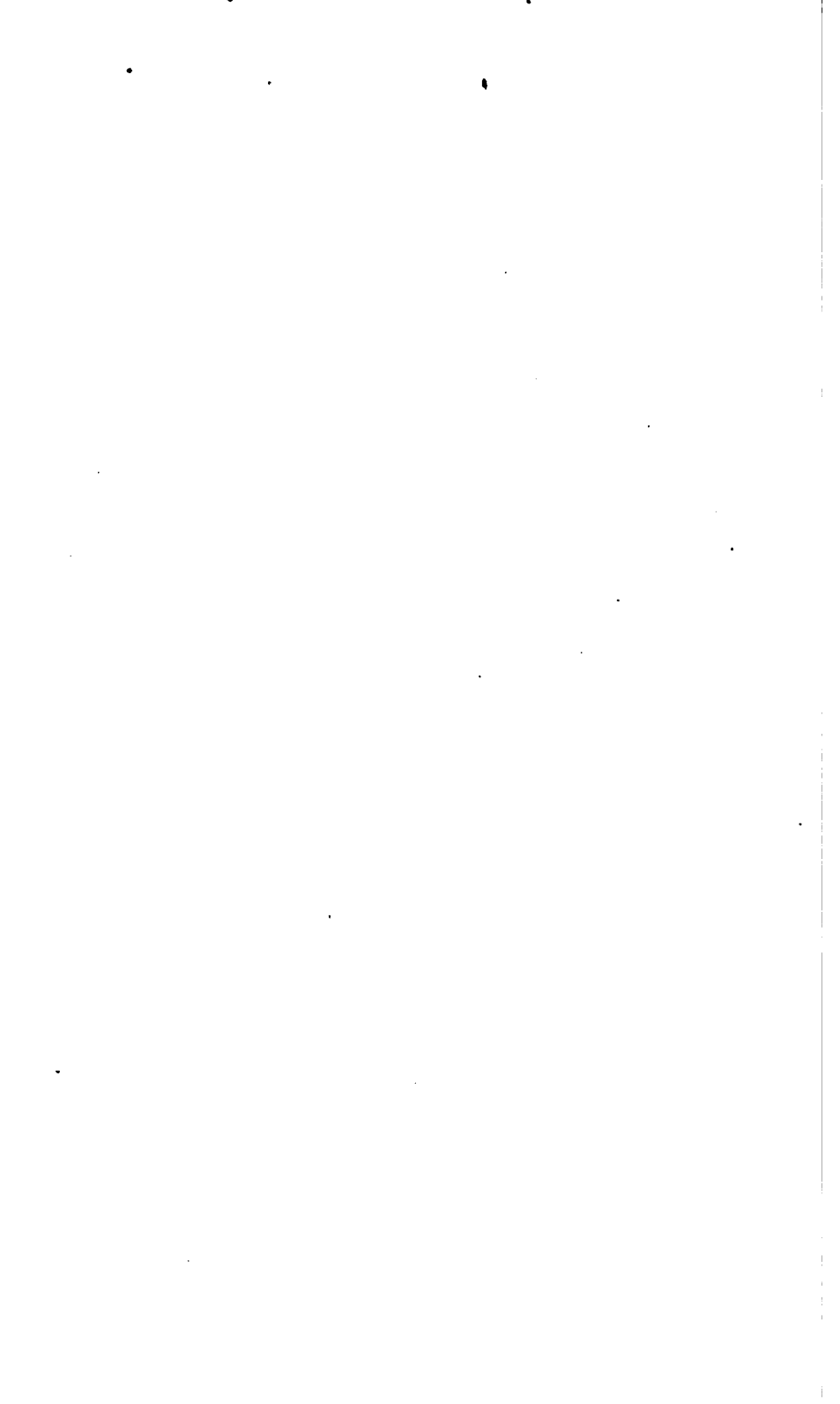
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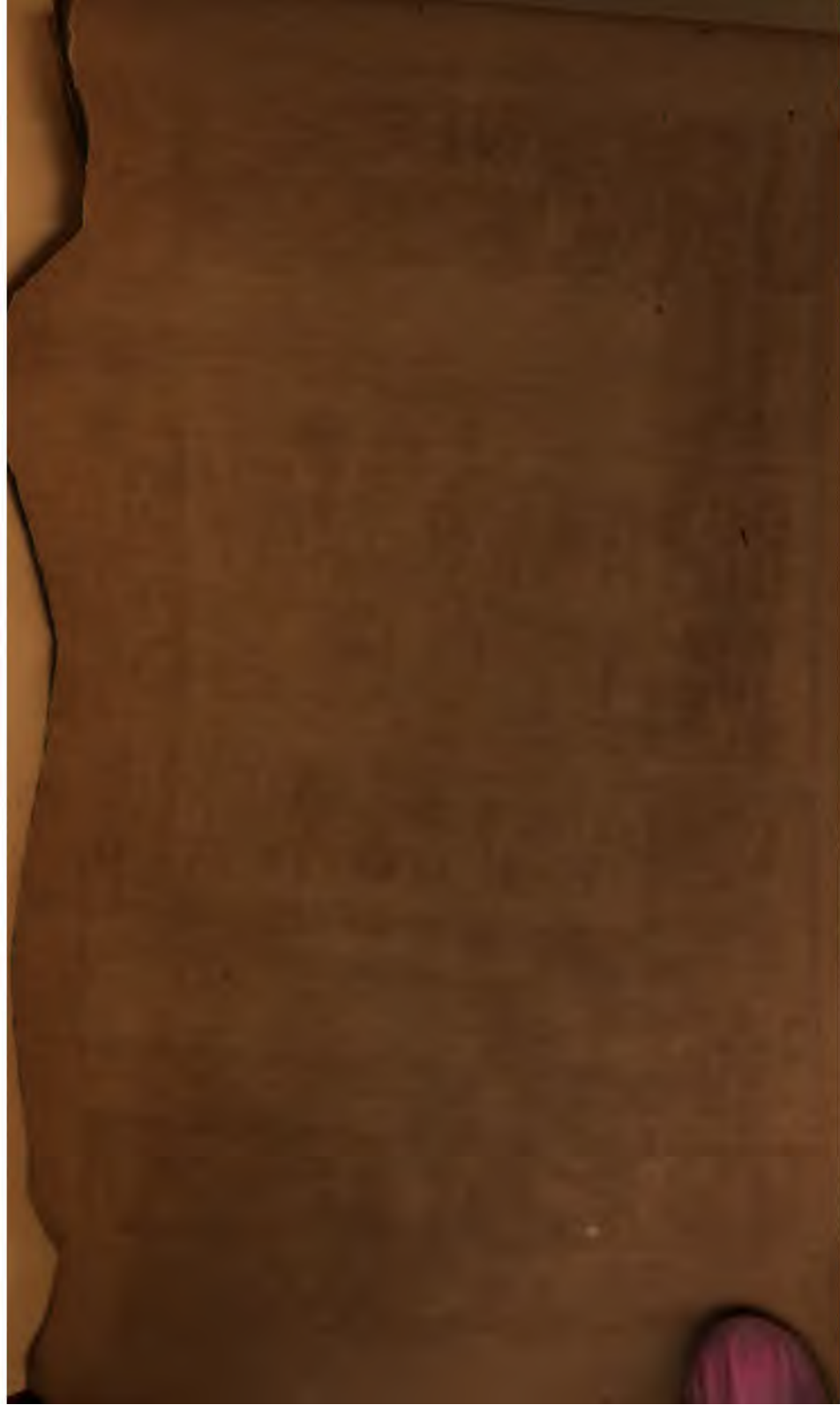
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See the Sketch.

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OF

LIGHT AND AMUSING LITERATURE

FOR

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LONDON SOCIETY.

JANUARY 1883.

THREE WIZARDS AND A WITCH.

BY MRS. J. H. RIDDELL, AUTHOR OF 'THE SENIOR PARTNER,'
'GEORGE GEITH OF FEN COURT,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

AN OFF-DAY IN THE PARK.

Down in the country the meadows were yellow with buttercups, the hawthorns were in full blossom; in that part of Hertfordshire where, in the woods, sweet-scented white and purple violets grow of their own accord, the turf seemed literally carpeted with them; beside the meandering streams of Surrey wild flowers were springing and blooming in unimaginable beauty and profusion; but still the spring had been late and ungenial, the accustomed easterly winds had held a longer carnival than usual, vegetation, on the whole, was backward; and, as a natural consequence, Hyde Park, which seems curiously and specially sensitive to the influence of weather, could not, in the May of 1874, be considered looking its very best, as is sometimes the case in that 'merrie' month sacred to catarrh, rheumatism, and bronchitis.

The winter of 1873-74 was what is generally called 'singularly mild.' It was singularly disagreeable, at all events: snow and frost held aloof, and bitter blasts and raw unwholesome mists and damps prevailed instead. That

season will in one district of London be ever held memorable for a most dense and awful three days' fog, during which period a darkness like unto that of Egypt spread its pall over the whole of the East-end, distinguishing that portion of the metropolis from the westerly land of Goshen, where comparative light reigned during that terrible time, when both the sun and the gas-lamps proved themselves totally incapable of guiding people safely through the streets.

On New Year's night 1874, indeed, it seemed as though the English climate had determined to turn over a fresh and satisfactory leaf. Such a fine evening was surely never known before on any 1st of January; so magnificent a moon rarely, even in August, has shone on fields where the grain was ripe for the reaper's sickle; but, like too many good resolutions made that day, the promise of amendment led to no lasting improvement, and winter dragged itself into the lap of spring; and the spring itself was late and dreary; and in the May of that year Hyde Park was not looking its best.

Hyde Park is a place which appears to greatest advantage when seen in full dress: when the trees are full of leaf and the

flowers in full bloom, and the Drive full of carriages, and the Row full of riders, and the whole scene one of incessant motion, and constant change, and shimmering colour, and varying effects.

At some periods and under certain conditions it looks more mournful than a desolate heath or a wide expanse of lonely moorland. There is a sky under which its aspect is depressing in the extreme. Even in the 'season' there are times when the very genius of desolation seems to be brooding over the grass, and the trees, and the mud-coloured Row, and the Drive when the last carriage has departed.

It is then, plodding his lonely way homeward, the whole show over, with the sun setting behind him, and night coming on apace, the pedestrian who is not rich or fashionable or prosperous feels a fine despair oppressing him, and is inclined, as a comforting exercise, to recite aloud six verses taken from the ninth chapter of Ecclesiastes.

Judging from the face of a lady who was walking her horse along the Row, she had compassed this state of mind little more than an hour after noon on the specially dull May day in the prosperous year of grace eighteen hundred and seventy-four, when my story opens. Tittlebat Titmouse himself could not have looked more dissatisfied. Her expression was gloomy as the aspect of the heavens, which seemed to betoken rain; and her listless dejected attitude accentuated the desolation of the Park, which was almost empty.

A Drawing-room had drawn nearly all the rank and fashion in town off to St. James's; and the few who at an earlier period of the day graced the Row were now gone home for luncheon,

leaving but one solitary rose to bloom, almost unseen, in a desert peopled apparently only by nursemaids, children of tender years, and Life-guardsmen.

And this was not a rose that liked to blush unseen. Solitudes were not places she would have affected of her own free will. She preferred to be amongst her kind, more especially when that kind included a considerable number of male admirers. A quiet life would certainly not have been her choice, and yet for the twenty years she had lived in this world a quiet life chanced to be her portion.

She was a very singular-looking sort of girl to be riding in the Park, apparently a total stranger. She seemed unknown, even by sight, to those who had, earlier in the day, passed and repassed her, and who now were gone away. Not a woman had spoken a word to her, not a man raised his hat. She had walked and cantered her horse round and round the Row, evincing a curious tendency to 'hug' the railings, instead of venturing out into the middle of the ride. A gray-haired groom attended upon her, keeping closer to his mistress than is the usual habit of grooms; and the discontent which clouded her face assumed on his the proportions of absolute ill-humour.

Yet, if beauty count for anything, she was a lady most grooms would have felt proud to follow.

As has been said, the Park was singularly empty. There were not any equipages worth noticing; the few equestrians had gone away, either because they feared rain or were hungry; the usual loungers were elsewhere; but still the young lady rode up and down, and round and round, with the dull steady persistence of a person on the treadmill.

That she was not enjoying her-

self in the least might have been patent almost to a superficial observer; the groom, who was enjoying himself even less, knew wherefore, and wondered why she did not end the ordeal and go home.

No fairer face was seen in the Row that season. One man, leaning upon the railings, decided no fairer face ever could have been seen anywhere. It was quite new to him. He had not beheld it before, and, while he stood watching her as she passed, he marvelled more and more who she could be, what she was, and where she came from. He was a man of about thirty, with closely-cut light-brown hair, and rather starved moustache. He had the look of a man about town; and, while evidently captivated by the girl's appearance, he eyed her with a critical investigating glance, which spoke more for the coolness of his head than the warmth of his heart.

He seemed to have no appointment to keep, or anything particular to do, for he waited on and on, watching lady and groom with a puzzled expression that certainly did not betray the full extent of the admiration he felt.

To him, over the grass, there came, with a quiet but not stealthy step, a man much his senior, who, saying, 'Well, Sudlow, as usual, admiring rank and beauty,' took up a position beside the person he so addressed.

'I do not know much about the rank,' answered Mr. Sudlow, 'but the beauty is undeniable;' and he fastened a bolder gaze upon the girl, who was passing at the moment, than he had previously adventured upon.

She saw this and coloured, and yet there was a look in her eyes—a downcast, indefinable look—which told she did not feel wholly offended.

The new-comer followed her progress thoughtfully.

'She can't ride a bit,' he remarked.

Mr. Sudlow made no answer, but he turned his head and stared hard and inquiringly at the speaker, who, though no question had been asked, replied, 'I should say not,' and then they both remained silent till after she passed again, which she did this time at the side of the Row furthest from where they stood.

'She is very beautiful,' said Mr. Sudlow.

'No doubt, to those who admire that sort of thing.'

'What sort of thing?' asked the younger man.

'If you can't see for yourself, it would be useless for me to try to explain,' answered his friend, in a tone which had something annoying in its very calmness; 'but the girl is good-looking—beautiful, if you like.'

'I wonder who she is? Did you never see her before?'

The other shook his head.

'Never; and it would not grieve me if I never saw her again. What have we here?' he added, as two persons, riding very fast indeed, came at a hard trot down the road leading across the Serpentine. 'You'll get yourselves into trouble, my friends, if you don't mind what you are about,' he added.

But apparently the pair knew very well what they were about, for, reining in their horses, they walked as quietly down the Row as if they had been riding lambs instead of powerful hunters, that looked ridiculously out of place in Hyde Park, and carrying such light weights.

There was a lovely flavour of the country about the new-comers. One was a lady, mounted on the heavier of the animals—a roan with black legs, a grand chest and

splendid action, which was well up to fifteen stone. For a moment Mr. Sudlow's acquaintance wondered why she rode the roan instead of the magnificent bay, upon which he fastened an appreciative gaze, but his wonder was not of long continuance. Just as the horses were passing the spot where they stood, the bay took umbrage at the sight of a stone roller which lay at the side of the Row. If it had been a wild beast he could not have made more fuss about the matter; he shied almost across to the opposite railings; he got up on his hind legs, and reared as if he meant to fall right over on his back; then he put down his fore legs and kicked, till Mr. Sudlow felt sure his rider's last hour was come; after that he tried to get his head and bolt; and when he was balked of this intention he seemed for a minute to lift all his four feet off the ground at once, and dance upon nothing in the air.

Meanwhile the gentleman sat the horse as if he had been part of him, and his companion looked on without evincing the slightest discomposure or anxiety.

'By Jove!' said the elder of the spectators under his breath, with an admiration which was as involuntary as it was genuine.

'People shouldn't bring such brutes into the Park,' observed Mr. Sudlow, who had turned quite white, and who would, indeed, have speedily placed himself beyond all risk of danger had not his dread of ridicule been greater even than his cowardice.

Then the centaur patted his horse on the neck as if he had done something praiseworthy, and the bay and the roan proceeded peacefully on their way side by side.

At the same moment, the girl who had been for so long a time exercising herself on the Hyde Park treadmill, and who was just then re-

tracing her way from Albert Gate, shrank past the pair, putting all the width of the ride between them.

No words could adequately describe the agony of terror into which the scene had thrown her. She had been coming on to meet the newcomers when the horse shied, and during his varied performances she sat with her eyes fastened on the rider, frightened almost to death, afraid to turn back, afraid the creature would rush madly upon her, afraid her own steed might next take alarm, suffering a thousand agonies in the space of about a minute, and for once in her life utterly unmindful of who might be looking at her, or how she looked. She had never even cast a glance at the roan, all her attention being concentrated on the bay, which she regarded in the light of a four-footed demon; nor, indeed, did the lady on the roan particularly regard her: but as they passed the groom a sudden light seemed to dawn upon her mind, and she looked back.

'Why, that must be Lavender!' she exclaimed; 'and, yes—certainly—that is Margaret Chelston;' and without more ado she wheeled her horse round, and, riding after the girl, said as she got close up to her, 'Who would have thought of our meeting here, Margaret?'

'That settles the matter,' remarked Mr. Sudlow's companion to that gentleman; and Mr. Sudlow somewhat shakily answered, 'Yes.' Evidently there had been a doubt of some sort in the minds of both men which was now laid at rest.

'I wonder who she *can* be, Gayre?' said Mr. Sudlow. 'Are you sure you have never seen her before?'

'Quite sure; and yet, oddly enough, her face seems familiar to me. O, look! this is very funny.'

It was rather funny. The girl

on the hunter had put up a warning hand to keep her companion at a discreet distance, and then, placing the object of Mr. Sudlow's admiration in safety between herself and the railings, proceeded with her conversation, whilst the man who was thus debarred from the delights of feminine society philosophically fell back on Lavender, to the manifest discomfort of a groom who 'knew his place' and 'had been accustomed to what was fitting.'

'It is long since I beheld so lovely a woman,' observed Mr. Sudlow.

'I never did,' answered Mr. Gayre.

'It is a pity you so seldom speak seriously.'

'I fail to see the particular application of your remark.'

'Why, it is not ten minutes since you said she might be very well for those who liked that sort of thing; now you declare she is lovely.'

'O, I was talking of the other one.'

'Pooh!' exclaimed Mr. Sudlow.

'There is no accounting for tastes,' remarked Mr. Gayre.

'So it seems,' was the curt reply.

'You need not be angry with me because I have not fallen in love with your beauty,' said the elder man. 'She is a very nice thing in girls, indeed. I should say she is not long from the country; but she will soon know her way about town. I dare-say, Sudlow, you may meet her at some party or other before you are much older.'

'Do you really think it likely?'

'I do, indeed. I should not mind buying that horse,' he added, following the bay with the eyes of a person who understood what was what in horse-flesh.

'What a curious seat the fellow

has!' observed Mr. Sudlow, trying to emulate his friend's critical manner.

'Do you know the reason?' asked Mr. Gayre, cruelly throwing him at once.

'No; do you?' retorted Mr. Sudlow.

'Of course; he has been accustomed to ride buck-jumpers.'

'And what the deuce are buck-jumpers?'

'It is a pity your grandfather is not alive to tell you,' observed Mr. Gayre; which was an extremely unkind cut, had Mr. Sudlow clearly understood the full meaning of his friend's remark.

'What are you going to do with yourself this evening?' asked Mr. Gayre after a pause, which Mr. Sudlow had devoted to the consideration of that conundrum concerning his grandfather.

'I do not know—nothing.'

'Come and dine with me, then.'

The fashion of Mr. Sudlow's face instantly underwent a change. It lighted up with pleasure and surprise, and he answered heartily,

'I shall only be too glad. How very kind you are to me! I can't imagine why you should be so kind.'

'Neither can I,' was the answer. 'You do not amuse and you do not instruct me. I have no daughter I want you to marry, and I have enough money of my own without trying to rob you of any of yours. Farewell, then, till eight. If in the mean time you discover why I am civil to you, tell me.'

Left thus to follow his own devices, Mr. Sudlow, after a moment's hesitation, turned and walked after the lady who had attracted his admiration.

'I knew it,' said Mr. Gayre, glancing back; and then, with a cynical smile curling his lips, he pursued his way, which happened

to be Cityward. He was accounted a great man in the City; he was a great man anywhere, indeed, if money and greatness can be considered synonymous terms. If a stranger had asked any one of the many persons who touched hats to him, and waved hands at him, and made a point of stopping to say, 'How d'ye do? how are you?'—as if their own existence depended upon hearing that the state of his health was satisfactory—who he was, the answer would have been,

'That, sir, is Mr. Gayre, the banker—Gayre, Delone, Eyles, and Gayre, Lombard-street.'

Utterly ignorant of the wealth and wisdom they had passed by unheeded, the two young ladies rode slowly on, talking as they went.

'Who in the world, Susan, is that person you are with?'

It was Miss Chelston who asked this question the moment the 'person' thus spoken of was relegated to the improving society of Mr. Lavender.

'He is my cousin,' answered Susan.

'O, indeed! which of them?'

'Mrs. Arbery's son. He has just come back from Australia.'

'Did he bring his steed with him?'

'No,' said Susan, laughing; 'that pretty creature and this,' stroking the roan as she spoke, 'belong to a neighbour, who lets us exercise them.'

'Does he wish them exercised in the Row?' asked Miss Chelston; 'because if he does, I will never venture into it again.'

'No, it is too far for us,' was the reply; 'but we should not do any harm to any one if we did come. Are you as timid about riding as you used to be?'

The beauty shrugged her shoulders.

'I hate it,' she answered.

'Why do you ride, then?' was the natural question.

'Why do we do a hundred and fifty things every day of our lives we would rather not do?' she retorted. 'O Susan, pray keep your horse a little further off. He has not a nice expression of face at all. He looks as if he would bite. I can't think what could induce you to mount such a monster.'

'He is tall,' agreed the other indifferently; 'but a hand or two does not much signify.'

'And where have you been living since your uncle's death?' said Miss Chelston, giving two young men who met them at the moment a full view of her face turned towards her companion, and her eyes raised with a bewitching expression of interest and sympathy. 'You dear old thing, it was hard for you to have to leave the Hall.'

'It was not so hard for me to have to leave the Hall as for you to have to leave the Pleasaunce, Maggie,' answered the other, with straightforward frankness and good sense. 'I knew the day must come when it would be necessary for me to go; but you—O, I felt so sorry for you!'

'Yes; but, after all, I don't think things are much worse with us than ever they were. Indeed, I think on the whole they are better. As for you, it is simply dreadful—to be brought up as you were, and then left without a sixpence. I call it disgraceful of your uncle.'

'Don't say anything against uncle, please, to me,' said Susan, involuntarily tightening her rein, and so causing the roan to spring forward, which movement elicited a little scream from Miss Chelston; 'and I am not left without sixpence,' she added. 'I have two thousand pounds left out of the wreck of my father's fortune. If

uncle had known sooner that great India house was going to fail, he would have arranged to leave me something; but as it was—'

'I know,' interrupted Miss Chelston; 'he always intended you to marry his son.'

'Who came home with a wife and two children,' added Susan.

'Dear uncle—dear, kind uncle!'

'That is all very well,' said Miss Chelston; 'but he might have left you some practical proof of his kindness. Even my father, who, as you know, is not remarkable for the interest he takes in the troubles of any one excepting himself, says it is a shame for you to be left out in the cold—a very, very shame;' and Miss Chelston nodded her pretty head to italicise the naughty words she would not utter in their native force and integrity.

'How is your father?' asked Susan; then, without waiting for a reply, she added, 'the first ride I ever had in my life was on his old horse, Wild Indian. Do you remember Wild Indian? It was my fourth birthday, and he took me all across the park and up the long beech avenue.'

'And he has told me often enough since you were not frightened, and that you ought to have been his daughter instead of me. I wish with all my heart you had been.'

They did not speak for a minute; each apparently was busy with her own thoughts; then Susan, looking at her old friend, said suddenly, and as if the fact had only just struck her,

'You are prettier than ever, Maggie.'

'Do you think so?' answered Miss Chelston.

'Yes, I always thought you were the most beautiful creature in the world; but you are more beautiful now than you used to

be. It is London, I suppose, and dress.'

'Dress improves every one,' said the young lady, as a sort of general statement which she immediately applied to a particular case by asking,

'What could induce you to come out in that hat and habit?'

'What is the matter with them?' asked the other.

'Matter! Why, they must be ten years old!'

'I daresay they are, or more; they are not mine. I tore my own habit to rags almost in Ireland.'

'Have you been staying in Ireland?'

'Yes, with the Dudleys. By the way, I wrote to you from their place, but I suppose you never got my letter. The girls hunted, and of course I went with them.'

'Of course you did. Does Mrs. Arbery hunt?'

'Good gracious, no! Why, she must be nearly sixty.'

'I didn't know. I only thought that might be her habit. Seriously, Susan, you must buy yourself something fit to wear.'

'It is not worth while. I shall not have the chance of riding even borrowed horses long.'

'Dear me! what will you do?'

'Do without.'

'And you so fond of galloping about the country.'

'A man may be very fond of champagne, and still find himself able to exist without it. Will Arbery says when he is out in the Bush they drink nothing but tea.'

'Will Arbery is this latest cousin, I suppose; any tenderness there?'

'Not the slightest. He has come home for a wife, I may tell you, and that intended wife's name is not Susan Drummond.'

'Most unfortunate Susan! whose cousins won't marry her, and who, for all her knowledge of horseman

—or rather, horsemanship—has not, I see, yet learnt to hold her reins properly.’

‘Yes, is not it stupid of me? I have tried to break myself of that old trick; but, do you know, I do not feel as if I had the slightest power over my horse when I take them the other way. Where are you living now, Maggie?’

‘We have only a friend’s house for a short time,’ was the rider’s reply. ‘When we are settled you must come and spend a long day.’

‘I shall be delighted,’ answered Miss Drummond. ‘You know Mrs. Arbery’s address, don’t you?’

‘Yes; Enfield, is it not?’

‘Enfield Highway,’ corrected the other.

‘Good heavens! have you ridden all that distance to-day?’

‘It is not so very far,’ laughed Miss Drummond.

‘And don’t you want to get back before night?’

‘There are many hours before night,’ answered Susan. ‘Still, we ought to be making our way home. Just let me introduce Will to you. Sultan is perfectly quiet, I assure you.’

‘Well, I don’t know; however, if I am killed my death will lie at your door. Your cousin won’t come very near me, will he?’

The introduction was effected without any mishap, Sultan comporting himself during the ceremony as if he had never stood on his hind legs or lifted his hind heels in his life. Then adieux were exchanged, and Miss Drummond and her cousin, having announced their intention of returning home *via* Camden-road, turned their horses’ heads towards Stanhope Gate, and were soon out of sight.

With a sigh of relief Miss Chelston pursued her way to the Marble Arch, thinking pensively as she rode slowly along that it was

a pity Susan Drummond had not the slightest idea of making herself fit to appear in decent society, and wishing she felt as little afraid of horses as that young lady.

‘Who do you think the girl is we saw in the Park to-day?’ Mr. Sudlow asked Mr. Gayre the same evening, as they sat *tête-à-tête* over their wine.

‘Which of them?’ returned the banker.

‘O, the one with the dark hair, and the dark-blue eyes, and the long lashes, and the damask-rose complexion.’

‘Yes, go on; who is she?’

‘Miss Chelston, the only daughter of Sir Geoffrey Chelston, of the Pleasaunce, near Chelston.’

‘Of Sir Geoffrey Chelston!’ repeated Mr. Gayre, setting down his claret. ‘God bless me!’

‘Why, do you know him?’

‘I used to know him,’ was the unexpected reply. ‘*He married my sister.*’

CHAPTER II.

SIR GEOFFREY CHELSTON.

THERE have been, since the institution of that order, all sorts of baronets—even good. To the latter class, however, Miss Chelston’s father certainly did not belong. He said himself he ‘was a good deal better than some, and not nearly so bad as most;’ but, then, no one who was fortunate enough to be acquainted with Sir Geoffrey attached much weight to any of his statements. Had this estimate of himself been true—which it was not—the moral condition of the rest of the world must have been, indeed, regarded as lamentable in the extreme; for Sir Geoffrey had, since his boyhood, been in the habit of doing those things which he ought not to have done; whilst those things

which he ought to have done he did not.

Geoffrey is not a name which suggests a taste for the Turf, a fondness for the society of jockeys, blacklegs, and gamblers; an almost inconceivable amount of ignorance, except on the subject of 'sport,' horses, games of chance and skill—an abundance of the disreputable lore which a man who has always been knocking about the world's least desirable haunts cannot fail to accumulate; to say nothing concerning a distaste, which almost amounted to hatred, for the pursuits, trammels, and traditions of a decent and orderly life.

There was no shame about the man, and there was no hope whatever of repentance—unless it might be a poor makeshift death-bed repentance, with a wasted life stretching behind, and an unknown eternity yawning in front. So long as a 'chance remained for him'—a chance, that is, of returning to the mud in which he loved to wallow—remorse was not likely to fasten its tooth upon him. His doings, his sayings, his sins, his shortcomings, were enough, in very truth, to have caused the scholarly ancestor from whom he inherited his name to rise from the grave, sold by this degenerate descendant to strangers, and return to see the ruin wrought by one man—one solitary man.

There had been spendthrifts aforetime amongst the Chelstons, but no spendthrift like unto this. There had been sinners—wicked, godless, graceless sinners; but either they died young, or, taking thought to their ways betimes, reformed and settled down ere age came upon them. There had been misers who grudged themselves food and the poor a farthing; but it was left for Sir Geoffrey to spend freely on his own pleasures,

and rob both rich and poor of that which of right belonged to them. His inherited title—won by a certain Ralph Chelston on a battlefield, where the fate of the day was changed by a mere handful of gallant soldiers—he dragged like a worthless garment through the mire of the kennels; while his name, one of the oldest in the kingdom, had become a mock and a byword amongst the vilest of women and the worst of men.

He was not born to poverty like many another, who, with equally little satisfaction to himself or any other human being, has travelled the road to ruin. It was not necessity which first made him acquainted with strange bedfellows. No impulsive generosity, no desire to serve a friend, no boyish prodigality in the way of giving great entertainments, or wild desire to scatter gifts around, brought him into early contact with the Jews. If he had desired a father's help and counsel, he could, till he was nearly twenty-six, have obtained both from a parent wise as loving. So far as man could tell there was not an excuse for the bad mad race on which he entered. Some said he 'cast back' to a certain Elizabeth Hodwins, who was raised by a former baronet from the condition of a fisherman's daughter to the rank of Lady Chelston; but those best learned in the family lore shook their heads when they heard this theory; for Elizabeth, possessing for her dower as much sense as beauty, had proved the saviour both of her husband and his fortunes. When she married him he was, with other gay gallants of his time, running a muck; but she took her husband well in hand, and brought him out of the ordeal safe, though not unscathed. She wore her honours with a splendid meekness, winning respect rather

than compelling it. She had, as one, who knew her well, chronicled, a 'smile for the rich and a tear for the poor;' in all ways an exceptional woman, who once, it was recorded, saved a child's life at the peril of her own. Except as regards mere brute courage, Sir Geoffrey had not a trait in common with his brave and beautiful ancestress. He had, at least, this one good quality—physically he was no coward.

People marvelled a man of such ancient lineage should play the pranks he did.

'Why, don't you know,' said a farmer once in the village tap-room, 'the older the seed, the worse the crop.'

Sir Geoffrey was an awful crop for any house to have to gather home within its records. With him the race seemed destined to die out. Slightly varying the words of James V. of Scotland, it might have been said of the wealth of the Chelstons that it had 'come with a lassie,' and that the name 'would go with a lassie.' The king who conferred the baronetage on Ralph the soldier added the hand of an heiress, who was nothing loth to wed the handsome hero. Since that time heiresses had come and gone, added their fortunes to the Chelston coffers; and now the coffers were all empty, and Sir Geoffrey had no lands, or houses, or money, or son, or anything but one fair daughter and a pile of debts that never could be paid.

Well might men wonder where the money had gone. There was nothing whatever to show for it. Sir Ralph had bought the estate, adding to his own small patrimony many a broad acre and goodly manor; Sir Charles built the great rambling house, and laid out the quaint gardens, and planned the terraces from the west front to

the river Speede; Sir Bruce built the stables and kennels, and then, when he tired of dogs and horses, bought the pictures and statues which made the Pleasaunce a show place. Then there was the Sir Ralph who entertained royalty; and Sir Geoffrey, who spent his life in collecting blackletter and rare editions, and who wrote a book full of useless learning, of which he printed but one hundred copies; and then came the saintly Sir Francis, who, after a youth of sin, devoted his old age and his money to ecclesiastical purposes, rearing and endowing one of the loveliest churches in the whole of England; then there was another Sir Charles, who performed great deeds at sea, and died an admiral; and a Sir James, who was a great politician, and rose to be a foremost man in the councils of the nation; and then there came Sir Cecil, with the scholarly tastes of his progenitor, Sir Geoffrey, which he entirely failed to bequeath to the son he named after that 'lover of the best thoughts of older minds.'

Never, surely, was there such a man for getting fortunes and wasting them as Sir Geoffrey the second. Before he was seven-and-twenty he came into possession of the Pleasaunce, a large sum in ready money, pictures, plate, horses, carriages, everything necessary to the establishment of a gentleman of rank and position. When he was thirty his mother, who had been an heiress, died, and he got her money. Two years later he married Miss Gayre, who had a fortune of thirty thousand pounds, which was so settled, the lawyers declared, that a coach-and-four could not be driven through it. When matters came to be investigated, however, it was found that if a coach-and-four had not scattered her fortune, Sir Geoffrey had burrowed a way into the money.

Four years afterwards his grandmother left him a satisfactory sum in ready cash, and this legacy was soon after followed by one from his only uncle.

But all these legacies were mere drops in the ocean; Sir Geoffrey went through them at a hand-gallop; and when he finally sank in a very rough sea of well-nigh unlimited liability, there was not a thing left to show for the money that had sifted through his hands but piles on piles of writs, and lawyers' letters in sufficient quantity to have papered the walls of the new 'thieves' kitchen' hard upon Temple Bar.

Everything saleable was sold; every go-able was gone—books, pictures, statues, horses, lands, furniture, stock, timber. If he had been able to dispose of his title, that would have followed in the wake of his other possessions. In less than thirty years from the time of his father's death he had not a rood of his own ground left, not even the family burying-place; not a roof to cover his head belonging to himself; not a chair to sit down on, or a table to dine at; not even old Chelston Pleasance—with its moss-covered avenue, and its rusty gates, and its park, kept latterly like a meadow, and its garden, where the roses were trailing across the paths—to go down to when London life grew for him very hot indeed.

To say that in any one respect, whether personally or mentally, Sir Geoffrey even faintly resembled a gentleman, would be to libel a class not accustomed to flattering smiles.

Of course when people heard he was a baronet, and had run through hundreds of thousands of pounds, they declared there was 'something about him,' that 'blood would tell,' and all the rest of it; but meeting him casually 'knocking about,' it

never occurred to any human being to suspect he was other than some disreputable horsey individual who frequented racecourses and stables, who affected very tight trousers, who was a proficient in bad language, who wore his white hat a good deal on one side, who walked with his legs wider apart than is the custom of those who have not spent best part of their waking hours on horseback, and to whom no respectable landlady in her senses would have let her first floor, even if furnished with the best references and offered a month's payment in advance.

It had happened to Sir Geoffrey in his comparatively palmy days to be taken for what he looked like; and as he never afterwards hesitated to tell the story himself, there can be no harm in repeating it here.

One day wanting something in a hurry, he called at the shop of a saddler with whom he had never before had any dealings, was shown what he required, and, marvellous to relate, laid down a sovereign in payment.

The price of the article was one pound precisely, but the shop-keeper handed him back two shillings.

'What's this for?' he asked.

'O, we always allow ten per cent to grooms,' was the answer.

'Do you?' said Sir Geoffrey, coolly pocketing the two shillings. 'I think I'll patronise you again.'

Which, indeed, he did to some purpose; for when the final settlement of his bad debts came about, it so happened he owed that particular tradesman something like four hundred pounds.

It is delightful to think of the charming manner in which favoured persons can incur debts they know they will never be able to discharge, and how easy it is for any man with a handle to his name to cozen the British tradesman.

You and I, my friend with the limited income, might wait a long time for a loaf of bread unless the B. T. were well assured the where-withal to pay for it would be duly and truly forthcoming. But a baronet, or a knight, though he may not have a lucky penny to bless himself with, need not, even at this present incredulous period of the world's history, want any manner of earthly thing that is good.

As regards Sir Geoffrey Chelston, he was one of those men out of whom no created being seems able to make money. He had no steward or lawyer or agent, or mistress or boon companion, who waxed fat while he grew lean. He was not systematically robbed or persistently cheated. His tenants were harassed, his solicitors worried, his friends victimised, his servants' wages left unpaid, and, as has been said, at the end of it all there was nothing to show for the princely estate mortgaged, for the fortunes gone, for the pictures and the books and the jewelry and the timber, any more than might have been the case had the whole been swallowed up bodily on one disastrous night in the Goodwin Sands.

Nay more, misled by the Baronet's easy indifference, by his gross ignorance of matters with which most men are conversant, by his 'devil-may-care' manner, by a certain fatalist warp of mind which had descended to him not from the fair Elizabeth, and by the impossibility of conceiving that it was absolutely necessary such wide estates and such an old title should 'go down into the pit,' many hopeful persons had tried whether 'something could not be done.'

Joyfully Sir Geoffrey surrendered the helm to each in succession: the credulity of any fresh fool concerning the future meant ready money to him in the present.

That it also meant loss to the fool did not affect the Baronet in the least.

'They speculated for a rise,' he was wont to say laughingly, 'and the stock fell—that was all.'

The stock did fall indeed; there was no quotation known on 'Change that could have adequately represented the fall in the Chelston stock as it appeared eventually to those who had felt quite sure they would be able to make a good thing out of it.

If I had not to write this book about quite other people than Sir Geoffrey Chelston and his dupes, or rather the dupes of their own imagination and self-confidence, who, setting out to shear, came home shorn, an instructive history might be compiled for the benefit of solicitors, bankers, money-lenders, and others, who were each and all represented on the bankruptcy schedule when the Baronet went airily into Portugal-street with a rose in his buttonhole and a straw in his mouth to pass his examination. Liabilities scarcely to be recorded in figures: assets available for the benefit of the unsecured creditors—*nil*.

Take one pleasing instance as an illustration—but a poor illustration, it must be confessed, because it is sketched from a landscape over which the evening shadows were drawing rapidly down.

A smart young lawyer, who thought all the wisdom of his predecessors folly, bought a practice in the market-town of Chelston, near the Pleasaunce. There he heard a great deal about Sir Geoffrey, his debts, his recklessness, his rent-roll, his mortgaged acres, his embarrassments, his one daughter, till he got nearly beside himself with the magnitude and originality of the design he had conceived.

He possessed a few thousands;

he believed he could reckon on a few thousands more from his relations. He knew a man who was enormously rich and the father of an extremely plain daughter; the 'oracle' might be worked, he considered; so without more to-do he set himself to work it.

Sir Geoffrey was not difficult of approach—bless you, not he! The young lawyer did not experience much trouble in boarding the good old ship Chelston, in enticing the Baronet into his pretty little parlour, in introducing that worthy to his blue-eyed wife, in walking down the street to the Golden Stag, where Sir Geoffrey put up; the talk between them being all the while as 'pleasant and familiar as talk could be.'

After a short acquaintance, he began dexterously to feel his way.

'Your affairs have been mismanaged, Sir Geoffrey, I am afraid,' he suggested.

'They have, damnably,' agreed Sir Geoffrey, with agreeable frankness; but he did not say by whom.

'It seems to me that all they require is a little systematic arrangement,' observed the adventurous young man.

'That's all "they ever wanted," answered Sir Geoffrey, with another oath.

'If a person were to devote time and energy to the matter, they could soon be put in train,' observed the lawyer tentatively.

'They might,' replied the Baronet; but it is only justice to add his tone was dubious.

There was nothing more said then. They went, of course, into the Golden Stag, where Sir Geoffrey asked his new friend what he 'would take;' and the wine which the landlord produced having been duly added to an already long score, the nominal owner of Chelston Pleasaunce got on his horse, and rode back to

that place, leaving the lawyer well satisfied with the progress he had made.

Not a fortnight elapsed before he was installed as Sir Geoffrey's legal adviser, of whom that gentleman had already about a hundred. He was told just as much as the Baronet chose to tell him; he paid out a couple of small but very pressing executions; he wrote to several persons who had issued writs; and he began to find his affable client in 'pocket-money.'

That was Sir Geoffrey's lively way of putting the obligation, and you may be sure the young lawyer laughed loud and long at the pleasantries.

The Baronet wanted so much pocket-money, however—or, as he put the matter, 'he had such a confoundedly big hole in his pocket'—that ere long his accommodating friend thought it might be better to expedite affairs a little; so he went across to the Pleasaunce one day, where he found Sir Geoffrey seated in the library, the portrait of his scholarly ancestor surveying, from its frame above the mantelshef, the long lines of well-nigh empty bookshelves; a small dog lying on the table, and a large one stretched on the hearthrug; brandy and soda-water on a tray beside him; and a number of unopened letters littering the blotting-pad.

'All duns,' said the Baronet, sweeping them carelessly on one side. 'Well, and what has blown you over? Some good wind, I am sure; for I was just wondering where I should get enough money to carry me to town.'

The lawyer took a seat, and commenced, with diplomatic caution, to unfold his plan.

'You'd like to be rid of all this annoyance, Sir Geoffrey?'

It was thus he opened his first parallel.

'Indeed, I should well like to be rid of it,' answered the Baronet; 'and if any way out of the — mess has occurred to you, I shall be only too glad to discuss it when I return from London.'

He had gone through too many interviews of the same sort not to have learnt his best wisdom lay in deferring the final hour of explanation. Explanation, bitter experience had taught him, meant a sudden stop in the supplies.

'When do you suppose you will be back?' asked the lawyer.

'O, in a few days; a week at farthest,' said Sir Geoffrey; 'and I want to start this afternoon, if I can anyhow raise funds.'

'I have not much money with me,' observed the lawyer.

'I can take your house on my way to the station,' suggested his client.

'Before I leave I should like just to ask you one question,' ventured the other.

'Ask away,' said the Baronet graciously.

'Should you have any objection to resettle the estate?'

Sir Geoffrey stared at him.

'How the dence could I do that,' he asked, 'when it's as good as out of my hands altogether?'

'But if it were back in your hands?'

'That's quite another matter. I'd do anything in reason, I'm sure, to get out of this blank blanked continual hot water. I can't see, however, where the good of resettling would be now. As you know, or as, perhaps, you don't know, there is not a male left to come into the title after me; and there was no remainder to females in the patent.'

The Baronet took great credit to himself in that he never, in his later years, told his legal advisers a syllable he could not swear to. He did not count silence any false-

hood. So long as they asked no questions he held his tongue; when they put a thing to him plainly, time had proved it was better to answer without equivocation. Then if they liked to go on deceiving themselves—which they generally did like—it was their own fault, not his.

For which reason he told this latest adviser a fact 'any fool,' to quote Sir Geoffrey, could find out for himself from the Red Book in a minute. There was no heir to the title.

'I am aware of that; O, I am quite aware of that,' answered the other.

'All I want is everything to be fair and above board,' said the Baronet, with a genial frankness. 'I don't know how you mean to help me; but I take it for granted you have some project maturing in your head, and all I can assure you is you won't find me stop the way if you are able to find an outlet. Only don't ask me to listen to any details now; for it is of vital importance that I should get into town by the afternoon express.'

Sir Geoffrey was detained so long in town by reason of what he called a 'stroke of luck,' that his new friend deemed it prudent to follow and 'put matters in train.'

He found the Baronet, who had won something considerable on the Turf, in the highest spirits. His talk was of a certain outsider who had come in first; and it proved somewhat difficult to get him to listen to all the other had to say.

Divested of verbiage, the lawyer's proposition was this:

He knew a gentleman who had made his money in trade—'never mind what trade,' he said hesitatingly.

'That does not matter in the least,' observed Sir Geoffrey, in a truly liberal spirit.

'If there were one thing this man adored beyond all other things, it was rank. He would, in a way of speaking,' declared the lawyer, 'part with all he possessed for a title.'

'Well, that's odd too,' commented the Baronet. 'I'd sell my title and'—but I need not particularise the other adjunct Sir Geoffrey offered to throw in as a mere makeweight—'for a few thousands, cash down.'

'He has a daughter,' went on the lawyer. 'She is not handsome, certainly. I suppose, however, you would not allow that to influence you much.'

'I always did prefer a pretty woman to a plain one; but what has she to do with all this? Her good or bad looks can't signify to me.'

'I thought you would take a sensible view of the matter,' observed the other. 'Now, I believe—indeed, I know—a marriage might be arranged which would at once relieve you from your more pressing embarrassments, and induce my millionaire—'

'Stop a minute,' said the Baronet. 'Do you mean a marriage with me?'

'I could not mean one with anybody else,' was the reply. 'You see no objection, I hope?'

'There is only one objection; but I am afraid it is insurmountable, unless you can find a way out of the difficulty. We can't get rid of Lady Chelston.'

'What Lady Chelston?'

'My wife.'

'But you have not got a wife.'

'Haven't I?'

'She died fourteen years ago.'

'Did she?'

'You—you haven't married again, Sir Geoffrey, have you?'

'No, faith! One wife at a time is enough for any man.'

'But you were left a widower

fourteen years ago, when you came back from abroad with your little girl, both dressed in deep mourning; and you said then, "Poor Maggie has lost her mamma."'

'So she had. When we were on the Continent my wife and I parted for ever. My daughter and I were in mourning, I remember; but it wasn't for Lady Chelston.'

'And do you mean to tell me Lady Chelston is still alive?'

'And likely to live, so far as I know.'

'And has there never been anything to enable you to get a divorce?'

'My good fellow, do not ask such ridiculous questions.'

'And you are tied hand and foot matrimonially as well as pecuniarily?'

'Your statement of the position is painfully accurate.'

'And how am I to get back the money I have advanced you?'

'If you advanced it in the expectation of being repaid on my marriage with your friend, who is, as you say, not handsome, I really have not an idea.'

'But I can't lose my money because you happen to have a wife living when everybody thought she was dead.'

'If you like to take your chance of hanging, you can get rid of her.'

Then the lawyer broke out. Sir Geoffrey himself could scarcely have indulged in worse language, in more futile and frantic profanity.

He would expose the Baronet. England should ring with an account of the transaction. He had been swindled; he had been robbed; he had been dealt with most treacherously; his pocket had been picked by a person who called himself a gentleman, but who was in reality no better than a common thief and swindler.

'He goes on in this way because I won't commit bigamy,' said Sir Geoffrey, addressing the imaginary jury the lawyer had summoned to sit in judgment on this heinous criminal.

'But surely in common honesty you will pay me?' said this irate creditor.

'Pay you! how in the world am I to do that?'

'Why, you have won a lot of money, you say.'

'O, but I want that for myself; besides, there is very little left. You talk about being deluded and disappointed. You have not been half so deluded as I have been. What is your disappointment compared to mine? I made sure you had hatched some scheme for cheating the Jews and giving me my own again, and now the whole thing resolves itself into an impossible marriage. Gad, if I had been free I'd have got a rich wife for myself long ago! You may be very sure I never should have employed a lawyer to look one out for me.'

Perhaps this matter hastened the end a little; but, under any circumstances, that end could not have been long deferred. There was a rush down to the Pleasance, a race as to which creditor should get his man into possession first; but they all got there too late. Sir Geoffrey had 'taken the wind out of their sails' by begging one of the men to whom he owed most money to petition the court, and the court sent down a messenger, who was comfortably installed at the Pleasance when the representatives of the two chosen tribes of Israel, and various so-called Christians, who may have been, and very probably were, descended from the other ten sons of Jacob, put in an appearance there, only to be immediately turned out again.

There was wailing and gnash-

ing of teeth amongst bailiffs and sheriff's officers, and lawyers and creditors; but the Baronet remained nobly serene.

'It was bound to come,' he explained to the friends who offered him their condolences. 'I don't really know that I can be much worse off than I was;' and seeing the resigned, not to say cheerful, manner in which Sir Geoffrey bore his misfortunes, people came to the conclusion there was something in the background, that he had prepared a feather bed to fall on, satisfied of which good management on the part of the Baronet, society refrained from giving him as cold a shoulder as it might have done had that amiable abstraction believed he was an honest man.

'I shall have to take a house in London,' he remarked, not because at the moment he had the slightest intention of doing anything of the sort, but merely for the reason that he thought the statement sounded well; 'a furnished house, till I can pull myself together a little.'

Then upsake young Moreby, who had been causing the large fortune left by his papa, a great colliery proprietor, deceased, to disappear like dust before the wind, till his mother, the widow Moreby, who, though sometimes doubtful in her English, had a thorough knowledge of business, came to town, and, assuming the conduct of affairs, as she had a right to do, being not merely executrix, but part-owner of all the coal-pits whereout old Moreby had extracted his money, announced her intention of taking him abroad away from 'all his vicious companions;' upsake this youth, who had not been blest with Sir Geoffrey's friendship for more than a few months, and said,

'My crib in the Regent's Park would be the very thing for you,

Chelston;' and then there ensued a little chaff and various allusions to Mrs. Moreby and another very different sort of lady who had exercised the mind of the worthy widow in no slight degree, which need not be more particularly chronicled here; and Sir Geoffrey made himself very agreeable while these themes were in progress, and any one might have imagined the last thing he had in his thoughts was one of the house in question or of taking in young Moreby.

But somehow he just stepped into the 'crib' as it stood—fully furnished—and, when he was fairly in residence, said quite calmly to his youthful friend,

'I do not know how to thank you sufficiently for lending me your house. It shall be taken good care of, I promise you.'

Now young Moreby had never dreamt of lending Sir Geoffrey anything without being paid for it; but he found the Baronet's understanding so dense on the subject, he was forced to yield the point with such grace as was possible under the circumstances.

CHAPTER III.

GAYRE, DELONE, EYLES, AND GAYRE.

THE Spirit of Improvement, taking a walk about the middle of the year 1857 one day down Lombard-street, bethought itself that the banking-house leased by Gayre and Co. from the gentleman whose fleshly tenement was temporarily occupied by the meddlesome sprite referred to, ought to be rebuilt.

Nothing less to the taste of the old firm could readily have been suggested. Ancient ways seemed good in their sight; spick and span new edifices savoured, according to their ideas, of shoddy com-

panies, limited liability, tricks of trade, bankruptcy, and various other matters hateful to honest men.

More, to rebuild would cost much money, and Gayre and Co. did not like parting with even a little money, unless, like bread on the waters, it was sure to come back to them after many days with interest from date added. Rebuilding would inconvenience them, and that was even a more serious consideration than the pecuniary outlay; rebuilding was unprofitably laying down gold at some ridiculous rate per foot on the property of another man; and the fuss and bustle, the hoarding, the scaffolding, the masons and labourers, the mess and lime and confusion, and utter demoralisation of the integrity of their dear old dirty den, would prove annoying, not to say intolerable, to their clients, who were mostly slow-going people of title and old-fashioned City merchants, whose fathers and grandfathers had trusted their money to Gayres' keeping, and never found cause to repent of the confidence reposed.

If a bank, and all a bank's customers, dislike change, cleanliness, and convenience, it is evident that without great external pressure things are likely to remain in their original condition till the crack of doom; but when this pressure did come in the shape of an expiring lease, and a ground landlord who would not be diverted from his purpose even by the offer of money, old Mr. Gayre, who was then alive, and Mr. Edwin Gayre, his son, set their wits together to try how little they could do in the way of making their bank look like any other bank of recent date as possible.

It is only fair to say they succeeded in their endeavour. Even to the present hour Gayres' is a model of what a counting-house

ought not to be. An old building at the back, which chanced to be their own freehold, was left untouched, and in a portion of that edifice the Gayre of to-day gives audience to the few persons who ever ask to see him, and transacts the little business it is necessary for him to attend to. Gayres have not gone on with the times; but they feel no desire to do anything of the kind.

Banks have come and banks have gone, but Gayres' still holds on the even tenor of its respectable way. Though the main part of the bank abutting on Lombard-street was, as has been stated, brand-new less than twenty-five years ago, it has managed somehow to acquire during that period quite a look of antiquity. For one thing, it was built on the old lines, and kept rigidly free from any improvements of structure or originality of design. It is as square as the size of the ground would permit; it has steps up to the door, apparently with the intention of checking the ardour of any stranger who might feel disposed to rush in and open an account; the exterior is utterly destitute of ornament, and the inside as plain as Dissenting chapels used to be. It is badly lighted and not ventilated at all. The way to the strong room is encompassed by as many traps and perils as those which beset Christian on his road from the city of Destruction to the better land; and there is a dark step down into Mr. Gayre's own especial sanctum which has nearly ended the earthly career of more than one intending client.

Any one who by some rare piece of good fortune gets a cheque to present across Gayres' counter feels as the narrow half-door swings behind him that he has stepped out of Lombard-street and the modern days of hansom cabs, rail-

ways, and electric light, into the seventeenth century, and he half expects when he steps out again to see the old signs which denoted the goldsmiths' whereabouts in the days when Mr. Francis Child, the first regular banker, married Martha, only daughter of Robert Blanchard, citizen, and lived with his wife, business, and twelve children in Fleet-street, where, to quote Pennant, 'the shop still continues in a state of the highest respectability.'

The Gayres were goldsmiths also about the same period, and had been notable people in the City even before the time when their relation, Sir John Gayre, was Lord Mayor of London. No mushroom house this, eager to extend its credit by means of cut stone and ornamented pilasters, or to flaunt its wares in the face of the public through plate-glass windows, or reflect the faces of dupes in French polished mahogany counters and brass knobs and rails. It was quite enough satisfaction for any man to know himself in the books of the firm, without looking upon his own distorted likeness in shining furniture and glittering lacquer.

Gayres were by no means anxious to open accounts 'on the usual terms;' indeed, their terms, according to modern ideas, were most unusual. They did not care even for the 'best bills;' upon the whole they preferred that bills of all sorts and descriptions should be negotiated elsewhere, and he would have been a rash man who had ventured to ask Gayres' manager to discount even the finest mercantile paper.

Conservative in their ideas of trade, though, following civic traditions, perhaps somewhat independent and radical in politics, Gayres' idea of banking was eminently primitive. According to

the traditions of their house a banker was a man of substance and repute, who took care of money for his customers. Gayres professed to do little more than this. Like their predecessors the Lombards, they could sometimes, though rarely, be induced to accommodate a well-known customer; but the whole transaction was fenced about with such forms and ceremonies, prefaced by such details, and requiring such an expenditure of time, legal advice, and thought, that 'the business' was, as a rule, transferred to some house accustomed to more rough-and-ready methods of procedure.

Time, to Messrs. Gayre, Delone, Eyles, and Gayre, might have represented eternity, to judge from the deliberation of their movements. To take, say, one hundred pounds in five notes over their old Spanish mahogany occupied more time than the cashing of ten thousand might at Glyn's.

But then Gayres looked down on Glyn's, as it did on Child's. Gayres represented itself as being more respectable than any other banking-house in London.

'Nell Gwynne banked there, did she?' said a Gayre, long and long anterior to the date at which this story opens; 'and Childs are proud of the fact, are they? I wouldn't have let the hussy set foot across our threshold.'

Which remark may give the key to Gayres' policy. Respectable, decorous, sound. If you had wound Gayres up at any minute in the twenty-four hours, enough would have been forthcoming to satisfy everybody and leave a balance.

Yes, even in the year 1874, when the Gayre in whose veins flowed the blood of all the Gayres since 1647, when John Gayre was Lord Mayor, to say nothing of

anterior generations, laid down his claret, and astonished his guest by declaring his sister had married Sir Geoffrey Chelston.

As has been said, banks had come and banks had gone, and, it may be added, banks were going; but Gayres' knew no anxiety as regarded its financial position. The heads of the firm had not appropriated their customers' title-deeds—a favourite form of latter-day banking dishonesty; the security on which their good money lay at interest they had never found need to mortgage. All their business lives for a couple of centuries, at least, they had been quiet, honest, orderly people, living well within their income, owing no man more than they could conveniently pay, eschewing speculation, holding aloof from the railway and other manias, that beggared and crippled so many large houses in the years preceding the great show in Hyde Park.

And yet Gayres' was not what it had once been. It could not have counted down guineas with some of the great banks, as it might formerly. The principals had not gone on with the world; and so the world, which latterly has got into the habit of travelling very fast indeed, made no scruple about leaving Gayres' behind. Some even of their titled customers, finding the old bank allowed them no interest on balances, were contracting a nasty habit of transferring two or three thousand pounds at a time to the London and Westminster, or National Provincial, or any other great bank in the habit of being more considerate. They kept their accounts still at the 'old shop,' which once hung out a tortoise for its sign; but even country squires and Tory noblemen were learning a few things their ancestors chanced to be ignorant of, and seemed as anxious and greedy to

make a 'tenner' as a lad to toss for tarts.

City was occasionally suggested it would be the most fitting of all fitting things if Gayres' were to hunt up the old tortoise out of their cellars, and hang it in the sun. Scoffers declared 'Gayres' was the slowest coach going in the City.' They wondered why, if Gayres' would not amalgamate with a bank that 'had some life in it,' it did not shut up, and cut the City altogether?

'And there is only this one fellow left, and he not married,' was the remark generally made. 'Why, he must be as rich as a Jew;' which did not happen to be the case. Mr. Gayre was well off, very well off, but he could not be called a millionaire, for all that.

Nicholas Gayre came of a stock more famous for saving money than making it. To pitch thousands about, to see gold flung recklessly into this venture and that, would have seemed criminal in the eyes of men who esteemed riches a possession to be desired, more especially when accompanied by a good name. Thus, if they had lost little or nothing, they had not made fortunes in a day, like their neighbours up and down the street. They took few measures to extend their connection; and so it occasionally happened that, as the heads of a family died off, the younger branches carried their accounts elsewhere.

Banking, in a word, had changed its character, and as Gayres' refused to veer round at the bidding of the banking world, the old house came gradually to be pushed up into a quiet business corner, like a dowager at a ball, 'whose dancing days are over.'

But it was while Jeremy Gayre and his son Joshua—whose name figured at the tail-end of the firm—were the actual heads of a house

in which Delone and Eyles had long ceased to be anything save sleeping partners, that a blow was dealt, sufficient to have destroyed a business built on any other foundation than the rock of honesty.

First, Delone elected to be paid out, and then Eyles. For long previously they had both been drawing the full share of the profits, and when the opportunity occurred they gladly said, paraphrasing the words of the Prodigal Son, 'Give us the portion that falleth to us.' Unlike the prodigal, however, they did not waste their money in riotous living; they bought estates, and went into mining and other speculations, and added to their store, and married heiresses, and took up their position among the first in the land, while Gayres' was left with a decreasing business and a reduced capital. Well was it for the bank that the principal in the firm had always lived, not merely well within his income, but so as to save largely out of it. Jeremy Gayre was, indeed, one to have satisfied the author of *Banks and Banking*, who thus drew, in pen and ink, a type of a class now well-nigh extinct:

'He' (i.e. a banker of the old school) 'bore little resemblance to his modern successor. He was a man of serious manners, plain apparel, the steadiest conduct, and a rigid observer of formalities. As you looked in his face you could read, in intelligible characters, that the ruling maxim of his life, the one to which he turned all his thoughts and by which he shaped all his actions, was, that he who could be trusted with the money of other men should look as if he deserved the trust, and be an ostensible pattern to society of probity, exactness, frugality, and decorum. He lived, if not the whole of the year, at least the

greater part of the year, at his banking-house; was punctual to the hours of business, and always to be found at his desk. The fashionable society at the West-end of the town and the amusements of high life he never dreamed of enjoying.'

Times, even during the noonday of Mr. Jeremy Gayre's existence, had changed so far that few merchants in a large way of business resided on their City premises. The upper portions of their houses could be utilised much more profitably, it had been found, than as mere dwellings; and Mr. Gayre, who understood the full import of that old Scotch saw which tells how 'many a little makes a mickle,' when he married let off part of the Lombard-street establishment, moved 'west of Temple Bar,' and took up his abode in one of the old roomy houses in Norfolk-street, Strand.

There was no Embankment then, or thought of one. At high tide the water came lapping up to the railings at the bottom of the street; and, save at the Strand end, there was no exit. Cabs and vans did not go tearing and rattling over the pavement, as is the case now; and the dwelling Mr. Gayre bought was as quiet as though it had been situated in some retired City court.

When in good course of time Joshua Gayre, the son, took unto himself a wife, he set up house-keeping in Brunswick-square, where four sons and one daughter were born and bred. Of these four sons, Jeremy, the eldest, died before he came of age. Edwin in due time went into the bank, in which, while still young, he was associated as partner. John elected to take orders; and, in compliance with the bent of the youngest son's inclinations, a commission was bought for Nicholas in a cavalry regiment.

The three were all good men and true. They sowed no crops of wild oats for their father and themselves to reap. Edwin took kindly to banking, John to the Church, Nicholas to the army. The latter rose rapidly in the service; he went through the Crimean campaign; and his regiment, crowned with distinction, had returned to England, when the Indian Mutiny broke out, and it was again ordered off to the East.

Five years elapsed before young Gayre, who had fought his way to the rank of colonel, saw his native country once more; then he came back in obedience to a summons from his father.

Great trouble had fallen upon the head of the now elderly banker. Edwin was dead, and Margaret had left her husband. Mr. Gayre did not see how the Lombard-street business was to be carried on without help, necessitated by the state of his own broken health.

Should he take a partner, or amalgamate with some other firm? or would Nicholas leave the army, and fill the place left vacant by the death of his elder brother? Nicholas took a week to consider, and then, to his father's infinite joy, signified his willingness to devote himself to commerce.

With a clear head and a stout heart he set to work to master the mysteries and intricacies of banking; and if Gayres' had been a different establishment, one in which the energies of an active man could have found full scope, there can be little question he would in the commercial world have risen to eminence.

But without changing entirely the lines on which the business had hitherto been conducted, he soon saw it would be vain to attempt to make the old bank a monetary power in the City. It might preserve its character for

unspotted respectability, and for a long time be made still to return a fine income; but no great financial future could be hoped for a house which had voluntarily dropped behind in the commercial race, and wilfully shut its eyes to the great changes for good or for evil being permanently wrought by steam, electricity, luxury, limited liability, the destruction of old landmarks, the extravagance of the Upper Ten, and, in the lower stratum of society, the determination of Jack to be as good as his master.

All this did not trouble Mr. Nicholas Gayre to any very great extent; and yet it would be idle to deny that it was a disappointed man who, leaning over the railings in Hyde Park on that May day when Mr. Arbery's bay mare indulged in such wild antics, saw Susan Drummond for the first time. When he unbuckled his sword and took up the pen, when he exchanged the saddle for a seat in his father's office, there can be no question he relinquished a great deal; but till he tried the experiment he fancied he should be able to find sufficient excitement in the heart of the City to compensate him, in part at least, for the career in which, when he abandoned it, he had so rapidly been rising to distinction.

By degrees he learnt he and his people were not made of the stuff out of which, at this time of the world's history, celebrated financiers are fashioned. The game was to be played, but not by him. Great things were possible, but not to Nicholas Gayre; and so, feeling he was out of the running, he stepped quietly aside and watched the mercantile game, where, as a rule, the stakes were power or poverty, wealth or bankruptcy, a baronetcy or outlawry, with a certain cynical pleasure he might not

have derived from the contemplation of greater things.

Never, perhaps, in the history of the City of London was there a better time for observing the humours of commercial speculation than the years immediately following his introduction to business life.

The wild speculation, the reckless private expenditure, the sudden madness of all classes; the swamping of little men, the absorption of small concerns into large, the wholesale annexation of many Naboths' vineyards in order that the great houses might have even 'larger gardens of herbs'; the pulling down and the rearing up; the pomp, the pride, the extravagance; the belief that the tide of apparent prosperity, then running so strong, would never turn—these things, and many more of the same kind, were for a time—only a short time, though—stopped by the collapse of '66.

In one minute, as it seemed, the Corner House tottered and crashed in; and for a while banks kept failing, firms stopping, old-established businesses tottering. Throughout the whole of England—from orphans who were left penniless, from widows stripped of their incomes, from country rectory and hall and cottage—arose an exceeding bitter cry of 'mourning and desolation and woe.'

'See the end of these men, Nicholas,' said old Mr. Gayre to his son. The prosperity of many a mushroom concern had tried the banker's faith—indeed, it is not too much to say there were times when he felt he 'had washed his hands in innocence in vain;' but now, as he looked at the commercial ruin hastened by the collapse of the Corner House, he shook his head gravely. "I have seen the wicked in great power," he quoted, "and spreading himself

like a green bay-tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." We have great cause for thankfulness,' added Mr. Gayre, after a moment's pause; and truly such was the case.

Weighed in the balance of that terrible panic, Gayres' were not found wanting. Every security was safe in the strong-room; the bank needed no help—nay, it found itself able to give assistance;

through the ordeal it passed in quiet triumph; and yet, eight years later, Mr. Nicholas Gayre could not be regarded as a perfectly contented man.

His being a nature which coveted success, it was scarcely to be expected he should feel satisfied with having merely compassed safety. 'And yet,' as he himself remarked, 'safety is a very good thing when it means the possession of a comfortable income.'

(To be continued.)

THE FOREIGNERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS,' 'VALENTINA,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

LANDSCAPE AND FIGURES (FRENCH).

ANY one who has listened to the croaking of French frogs through a summer night will feel that there was some excuse for the châtelaine in old times, who kept the peasants out of their beds when she was ill, to beat the ponds with sticks; for in these days of equality, when no one interferes with the frogs, and they can croak as they please, night is made hideous for people who live near ponds or marshy ground.

But in the dusk of evening, when the soft dark shadows are falling, and the old château up above is beginning to glimmer with lights, there is something wild and romantic in that harsh music. It takes one back a hundred years or two, and reminds one how old France is, with all her young ideas. Her history still lives in these silent country places, where, far from Paris or any large town, the frogs croak, the owls hoot, the high-roofed towers stand up against the solemn evening sky. The peasants, grave and practical, with their quaint words and ways and superstitions, not caring much what the Government is, provided it gives them peace, are part of that old France too. They are free, but they work as hard now as they did a hundred years ago. Now it is for themselves, not their masters; that is the only difference.

In the low ground of the park at Maulévrier there were two or three ponds leading one into another by rush-choked channels, the peaceful home of hundreds of frogs. These ponds were in a lonely place, down to the right of the avenue that led from the château to the village. They were haunted by rats and water-fowl; the ground about them was marshy and useless.

Madame de Maulévrier had an economical soul, and made as much profit on her land as she could, without spending much money. Most of the park was cultivated; the south-west slopes were turned into vineyards, the rest was divided into patches of wheat and maize, and other crops, while the part near the buildings was planted with apple and cherry trees, and a flock of sheep found their living among the rough wild grass that remained in the avenue under the green 'charmilles,' or alleys of clipped elms, that stretched across the park in every direction.

One of Madame de Maulévrier's friends had lately given her a pair of Muscovy ducks, which took up their abode on the ponds. They had a little wooden house on the bank, where Mrs. Duck was expected to lay her eggs. But she preferred laying them among the rushes, in a place, chosen by herself; the consequence was that the water-rats had an egg for breakfast every morning. This made Madame de Maulévrier very angry, and she ordered her farm people to catch the ducks every

night and shut them up in their house.

It was a still cool June evening, and the scene would have delighted a French painter; so the one spectator thought, as he leaned against a tree, with his arms folded, and enjoyed it. The sky was gray and silver and gold, with great soft lakes of clear and limpid blue. The broad shining surface of the pond mirrored the soft colours faithfully, except where the rushes stood up in slender groups. a bold frog or two croaking among their stalks, or the white duck made great rippling circles as she swam round and round to escape her persecutors; a man in a broad straw hat and a blouse, wading waist-deep among the rushes, and a woman, also dressed in blue, with a round white cap, and a long willow branch in her hand with which she lashed the water now and then, crying out, 'Ah, cane!' in a monotonous musical drawl. In the background the lines of gray-green poplars and willows just rustled in the evening air, their leaves showing as they whispered the faintest silvery sheen. The peasant-woman's little girl of two years old, with a round brown face, and black eyes staring, a small white cap covering her hair, and a blue frock down to her heels, stood grasping some railings on the near side of the pond, watching her mother with a rapt interest that led her to creep nearer and nearer to the water's edge.

Presently the duck glided into the rushes, and her pursuers moved cautiously along the bank to the further pond. The looker-on seemed at first to have some idea of following them, but his dark melancholy eyes rested on the child, and he remained standing where he was. The splash of

the long willow wand was heard again in the next reach of shining water: 'Ah, cane!' came, softened by distance, and the frogs near the bank where the young man and the child were standing began suddenly to croak in chorus. The little girl joined her voice to theirs, and burst out crying plaintively, for she could no longer see even her mother's head over the forest of rushes. A momentary look of vexation crossed her companion's face: his next impulse brought him to the child's side. He stooped down, and took her small brown hand in his.

'Come, little one, you must not cry. Your mother will be back soon.' The child stared at him in an amazement that conquered her terrors. Presently, as he stood high above her in the grass, she clutched at a button of his tan leggings, and, holding tight on to this refuge, began to chatter in her broken patois.

He looked down at her at first with a faint dreamy smile, of which even this little uncivilised creature felt the sweetness. Then his face became grave, and his eyes wandered away again across the water. At last the man and woman were returning in triumph. Marie Mingot, smiling satirically, was carrying the duck by her long white wings.

'Ah, voyons!' said she. 'What good have you done yourself by giving us all this trouble?—Merci bien, monsieur le Marquis! That child is a little fool: she must be always with her mother. Viens ici, Jeannette!'

She and her assistant had a few remarks to make on the business in hand. If madame la Marquise would have these ducks caught every evening, she must send a few more people down to do it. Voilà! Monsieur le Marquis had seen for himself

what an affair it was. He listened without much concern, and presently began to stroll away up the hill, while the peasants with the child moved slowly off in the direction of the farm where they lived. The frogs resumed their concert with much spirit as soon as these human intruders were gone.

A few yards up the hill, M. de Maulévrier met his mother, a small plainly-dressed woman, with a severely handsome face. He made her stop to look at the fading western sky, the soft refined tints of the landscape.

'I assure you,' he said, 'just now, when Jean and Marie were chasing the ducks round the pond, it was a scene worthy of Corot or Millet.'

'I don't share your admiration for those people, my dear friend,' said Madame de Maulévrier. 'Did they catch the ducks? That is the question.'

'Certainly. Did any bird or beast ever defy la Mingot? They are safe in the house, and you will have your egg to-morrow morning.'

'Very well.'

Madame de Maulévrier took her son's arm, and they walked together towards the château, the tall grey roofs of which rose among the trees not far off. Coming up near the west side of the house, which faced north and south, they passed out of the park by a gate into a wild sort of garden, with beds of geraniums and roses on a wide lawn belted with trees and shrubberies, sweeping green slopes falling to the park wall of white crumbly stone. To the south, beyond the alleys of the park, the view ended in a broad dark mass of forest, which stretched away over the hills for miles. Madame de Maulévrier sat down on her favourite bench, which stood near the edge of this lawn, under an old lime-tree,

whose flowers were just beginning to breathe sweetness in the air. Two nightingales were singing a duet in the shrubbery, among the acacias and laurels and young drooping fir-trees. Here Gérard de Maulévrier had sat with his mother thousands of times since the day that she carried him out in her arms, that first baby with his dark eyes, so much dearer to her than any that had followed him. He was now a man of five-and-twenty, tall, dark, and pale, with a long brown moustache, and an air of distinguished grace which somehow blended with his melancholy, and made it seem only natural. Some people said he was a man of the last century, born out of his time; but these were not the people who knew him best. Not that he had any very intimate friends; his mother's claims upon him were too large to leave a fair share for any one else. It was a great pity for Gérard. But Madame de Maulévrier of course did not see that; and he submitted, for he was gentle, and loved his mother.

'Now let us finish our talk,' said the Marquise. 'You understood all I was saying before dinner, and agreed with me. There are two things to be considered, our party and our family. The same rule holds good in both cases. Here am I, unfortunate woman, with four sons, an income of 40,000 francs, and a house of this size. It is impossible that more than one of you should marry, and for that we must arrange things prudently.'

Madame de Maulévrier seldom did her sons the honour of consulting them. She generally gave her orders, and was obeyed without question. To-day there was a slight hesitation in her manner, though her words were positive enough. She was looking rather

anxiously at Gérard, who was stooping forward, his eyes fixed on the ground.

'Oui, ma mère,' he said, with a slight sigh.

'About your brothers it does not matter,' Madame de Maulévrier went on. 'They have their profession, their little allowance; they can be here as much as they please. They must consent to my arrangements. How can you live here, how can you marry, without some family sacrifice? In these times a young man is much better without a wife, unless, like you, he is the head of the house. What are you thinking of? Are you pitying your brothers?'

'My brothers are such good boys,' said Gérard, 'that they would give up everything to me without a single grimace. I do not like these arrangements. But, of course, for the king, and for one's family, a sacrifice has to be made. Only, my dear mother, why should I be the one to benefit by it?'

'Because you are in your right place, and will remain there. And when the Maulévriers have been Gérard, fils de Gérard, for so many generations, do you think I am going to let you break the chain? Besides, my friend, what would become of you if you did not marry? You to live on here, with no interests, growing older and older, a mere useless brother, while Victor's or Léon's children tyrannised over everything! No, not while I live!'

'I should be a useless hanger-on, you are right,' said Gérard, sadly. 'I must marry, then. But I suppose there is no hurry. I may wait—to find a woman that I can love, and who will be a good daughter to you?'

Madame de Maulévrier looked a little disturbed, and did not at once reply to this speech.

'I wish you would be reasonable,' she said presently, 'and more like your father. He had the best heart in the world, and we were the closest of friends. But that nonsense of love before marriage was never so much as dreamt of in our days. Leave that to the poets, my poor Gérard, and to people without breeding or self-control. Or, if you must have this little amusement, fall in love at once with Mademoiselle de Brye.'

'Mademoiselle de Brye!'

'Certainly. Who else?'

Madame de Maulévrier and her son had had conversations before on this subject, but they had never gone quite so far, or become so painfully practical.

Gérard first frowned, then smiled incredulously. His mother was looking at him with a sort of imperious impatience.

'But—Mademoiselle de Brye!' he repeated. 'She is a child, is she not? Pardon, ma mère—but hers is the last name that would have occurred to me.'

'That is strange enough,' said Madame de Maulévrier, 'when I have known for years that my son would and could marry no one else. She is an only child; their lands join ours; it will be an advantage to them as well as to us. We can meet them on equal terms—I think of that, if you do not. Perhaps you would prefer marrying the daughter of some nouveau riche—some man who began life behind a counter? You will be the first Maulévrier who has distinguished himself in that way. The family of Brye is as old as our own. They are excellent people.'

'Excellent people!' repeated Gérard, in despairing acquiescence.

After a few minutes of silence Madame de Maulévrier got up, and walked towards the broad

flight of stone steps, stained with brown moss, which led to the garden door of the château. Before she reached them she turned round, and with the same steady firm step came back to Gérard.

'Are you the first person,' she said, 'who has had to give up his own fancies for the good of his family? We cannot get rid of our duties in this world. You young people talk of happiness in your childish way. I tell you it is only to be found in doing one's duty. Come! Are you going to sit moping here all the evening, my son?'

Gérard roused himself at once, got up, and kissed his mother's hand. She did not give him any embrace in return, or speak to him again as he followed her into the house.

Mademoiselle de Brye was put aside for that evening. The Marquise sat and knitted in her large arm-chair, near a window of the great cold-looking salon. Gérard read out articles from the *Union* and the *Figaro*. Over the darkening fields and woods brooded the deep silence of the country, broken only by the frogs as they croaked their evening hymn.

CHAPTER II.

THE MARQUIS AND HIS TUTOR.

THERE were many things that united to make Gérard de Maulévrier sad. For instance, he had a passionate love for his country, but it was that of a Catholic and a Legitimist; and he had not the hopefulness which makes some of his party smile when they read in some well-informed newspaper that their cause is dead and buried. He had been terribly grieved, when quite a lad, by his mother's refusal to let him go and fight the Germans; the boy, with

all his gentleness, was a soldier by nature; and the whole story of that war, which he was obliged to watch from a distance, was a wound to his spirit that had never been healed. Since those days he had served his year in the army like other young men, and would gladly have made it his profession, but Madame de Maulévrier, to whom this had been a year of misery, refused her consent, and insisted on his living at home. That life, except in the sporting season, was a very monotonous one. Gérard's brothers wondered how he could endure it. Two of them were in the army, and the youngest was in the navy. They admired their eldest brother, but had not much in common with him, and all three had a wholesome awe of their mother, to whom modern ideas of spoiling one's children were quite unknown.

Gérard was happy with his mother, who gave him all the love in her heart. She had not wanted the others. It seemed right and natural that everything should be given up to him. Yet, in his low-spirited moments, which were many, the young Marquis thought himself an unfortunate man. Their poverty tried him then—the difficulty of keeping up a great place like Maulévrier, in the roughest and simplest way, on an income not much exceeding 1500*l.* a year. Madame de Maulévrier managed this, however, and a good deal more besides, to which the curé of her village could have borne witness. Gérard had not much to do with it; yet, when he thought of these things, they troubled him. And now he was to marry Mademoiselle de Brye.

He lay awake that night with a new oppression on his mind, a new anxiety, a new cause of endless ennui. To do him justice, he

did not forget to be sorry for the girl who was to marry him. Of course there was no escape, no way out of it; his mother would arrange it all, probably without consulting him any more. There was only one hope, that Monsieur and Madame de Brye would not consider him a sufficiently good match for their daughter. But no, his mother had most likely sounded them already. So Gérard resigned himself, yawned several times, went to sleep, and slept till the sun had long been pouring in through the chinks of his shutters, and his coffee was waiting for him on the table.

Every morning, summer and winter, Madame de Maulévrier went to the seven o'clock mass at the village church. She did not expect her son to go with her; every one at the château was independent till eleven o'clock, when the breakfast bell rang. To be late or absent then, or at dinner, was a serious crime. Till eleven the Marquise was always busy with housekeeping or farming, or some benevolent work. She and her son seldom met before breakfast, for Gérard often spent the morning reading or writing in his own room.

This morning he was restless, and went out early, taking a short cut to the village through a corner of the park where they were making hay. It was a brilliant June day, the air dazzlingly clear, the sky shining deep blue behind the motionless trees—one of those faultless days that seem to have found their way from Paradise into this world of disturbed weather, of clouds and storms, and disappointments. Gérard was much influenced by weather, but even this sunshine could not give any hopeful life to the idea of Mademoiselle de Brye. She had been educated at a Paris convent,

and he had not seen her since she was a child; but it was impossible—impossible—that the daughter of Monsieur and Madame de Brye should be interesting.

This young man had made his own romantic ideal of a wife. She was to be beautiful and stately and gracious; religious, and yet liberal-minded—for Gérard's religion was rather of the *dilettante* kind; such a perfect friend, that her husband could tell her every thought of his heart without fear of being misjudged or misunderstood. Gérard had once confided some of these ideas to his next brother, Victor, who, with a fine knowledge of the world, had smiled, and asked whether it was possible that such a woman existed. These cynical notions were horrible to Gérard, and since then he had kept his visions to himself. It was true that, as he grew older, and now and then saw young ladies who had points of resemblance with each other, but none with his ideal, he began to think that perhaps he should never meet with her, and in that case he would never marry. But now duty, and that stern power of fact which is always waiting to pounce upon the happy sleeper and shake him out of his dreams, had come to Gérard in the shape of his mother, saying, 'You must marry Mademoiselle de Brye.'

He stopped a few minutes in the meadow to talk to the mowers—picturesque fellows, who travelled from place to place for work, with their dark southern faces, blue linen clothes hanging loose on their lanky frames, and enormous brown rush hats worked with scarlet braid. One of them, the wag of the party, kept the others laughing whenever they stopped to whet their scythes. Gérard half wished he could change places with that light-

hearted fellow, full of his country jokes, which yet had nothing coarse or unpleasant about them. After standing there among the freshly-cut grass for a few minutes, and enjoying a laugh, which did him good, and made him forget his fate for the moment, Gérard wished them good-day and left them, going rather more cheerfully on his way to the village.

Maulévrier was a long straggling place, the centre of life to a wild, lonely, wooded country. The houses were scattered prettily among orchards and small fields, and a bright stream, crossed by two or three bridges, ran winding through the village, reflecting rows of willows and poplars, and turning a mill at the end. The church stood on high ground, above the road and the stream. It had a tower and low wooden spire at the west end. The hill-side was covered with small crosses, many of which were hung with bead-wreaths and immortelles. Near the broad steps stood a tall iron crucifix, looking down upon the road. Just opposite the church-yard, a green barred gate, always open, led into the garden of the Presbytère. A trellised walk of vines went straight up to the door, and then branched off into a verandah along the front of the house, where the sun shone through the vine-leaves on a worn stone pavement, and a small table and chairs stood by the curé's study-window. There was a square of vegetables and fruit-trees on each side of the garden, divided by the neatest little gravel paths, and bordered with rows of white and tiger lilies, and pink roses in long sprays and clusters. The house-door opened into a narrow passage painted blue, on one side of which was the study, lined with book-shelves; on the other, the

bare little dining-room. Altogether there was something warm and smiling and sunny about the Presbytère; it looked like a home of studious peace. A large white cat with long hair was lying on the doorstep; she got up, with an air of dignified ease, to welcome the young Marquis. Her master, hearing footsteps, called out from the study,

'Is that you, Gérard? Come in, my child.'

The Curé of Maulévrier was a remarkable man in the province. He had a story, but no one quite knew what it was. Some strange circumstances, it was plain, must have brought him into that lonely village and kept him there, for he was not of the stuff of which country priests are usually made. He was a scholar and a man of the world, though for the twenty years of his life here he had been a hermit, avoiding every one but his own people. He had acted as tutor to Madame de Maulévrier's sons; Gérard, in fact, had had no other, for his mother could not bring herself to send him to college. But she knew that his education, as far as books went, was quite safe in Monsieur Olivier's hands; and, for the rest, she had a perfect confidence in herself and in Gérard's natural tastes.

The Curé rose up from behind his desk, and held out his hand to Gérard with a hearty greeting. He was a tall thin man of fifty-five, with curly gray hair, a long nose, and quick pleasant dark eyes. After wishing him good-morning, Gérard sat down in one of the hard wooden chairs and stared at the red-tiled floor.

'Well, my friend, have you had bad dreams?' said the Curé.

'I wish it was only a dream,' said Gérard, looking up. 'You know all about it, monsieur, no

doubt—the torment that is in store for me. I cannot be left in peace. I must marry—you probably know that I am to marry Mademoiselle de Brye.’

‘I neither hear nor understand you,’ said the Curé, ‘when you speak in that tone of a young lady.’

Gérard blushed scarlet and did not answer.

‘I will just remark in passing,’ said Monsieur Olivier, ‘that the young lady is charming—far too good for a young fellow without manners, like you.’

‘Ah, I don’t doubt that in the least,’ said Gérard. ‘But my present wish is, not to marry at all.’

‘That must be a great grief to madame your mother, who has arranged everything for years past with a view to your marriage.’

‘Yes, I know. I am to be king of everything. Victor, Léon, and Jules are to give up all their rights to me; they are to have no fortune, are not to marry, are in fact to be sacrificed, that I may have all. I detest it!’ exclaimed Gérard, starting up and beginning to walk about the room.

‘What is it that you detest, my friend?’ said M. Olivier, leaning his chin on his hand, and watching his former pupil with a faint smile.

‘The whole thing. And especially this hateful cheating of the law. That says we are to divide the property equally. I am right, am I not? That is the law of France. What business then have we with these family arrangements?’

‘The Code Napoléon—yes, that is no doubt the law of France,’ said M. Olivier. ‘But you will not be cheating the law, for people are allowed to renounce their succession if they choose. And if madame your mother wishes

it, your brothers will agree to do it.’

‘It is very hard on them,’ said Gérard.

‘Now, consider a little. Look at the plain facts, and do not distract me by marching about like a caged tiger.’

Gérard threw himself into his chair again. ‘I know the plain facts well enough, dear monsieur,’ he said with a sigh. ‘My mother has often explained them to me.’

‘Hear them once more,’ said the Curé. ‘Madame de Maulévrier has managed the estate up to this time, through many difficulties. She has done her best—you little know, you lazy selfish boy, all that madame your mother has done. But still, if the property is to be divided into four parts, it will have to be sold; there is no other way. You will none of you have enough to marry on, your old family will die out, you will be parted from the old place whose name you have borne for ten centuries, the Church and the King will lose one of their strongholds, and they have too few! Well, Gérard, I knew a family in the South whose circumstances were the same. There were four young men—their parents were both dead. I need not go into the whole story—but they chose the youngest to marry, and gave up all their claims to him. They are old men now, but their respectable family still exists in the old house of their fathers.’

‘The youngest married, you say. Then why—’ began Gérard, and paused.

‘Your mother’s heart clings to you,’ said the Curé, gravely. ‘What is this new rage against marrying? Suppose that the lady proposed to you was the very person you admired beyond all others—would you be so anxious then, my friend, to screen your-

self behind the injury done to your brothers?"

'You make me out very base,' said Gérard, half indignantly.

'Not at all. Only very young. And young people are apt to think that there is nothing in the world but themselves and their happiness. You wish Victor or Léon to marry this lady, who is too good for any of you, and because you transfer your rights to him, you will think yourself a hero of self-sacrifice. We are all alike, my poor Gérard.'

The young man was flushed, and moved uneasily; but there was something in M. Olivier's voice and eyes which made it impossible to be angry.

'What is the use of talking about it?' he said presently, in a low voice. 'My mother will arrange it all. Let us leave the subject.'

'Certainly. Let us talk about our dear Léon. I hear he is quartered at Tourlyon.'

'Yes. I am going to see him next week,' said Gérard.

Léon was evidently a favourite of M. Olivier's; he spoke of him with great affection. After a time Gérard asked suddenly whether M. de Brye had not a house at Tourlyon.

'Exactly. A pretty house in the outskirts of the town. They spend a good deal of time there,' said the Curé.

'Dear monsieur, I was not even aware that you knew them.'

'I know them very little, except by report,' said the Curé. 'Now it is my breakfast time, so you had better go home, unless you will breakfast with me.'

Gérard thanked him, but that was impossible; so he left his old tutor to his bread and vegetables, for it was Friday, and set out on his walk back to the château. He had not, apparently,

gained much by his visit. Still it was a melancholy satisfaction, and helped him a little in the way of resignation, to find that his two oracles were agreed. M. Olivier said just the same things as his mother, only in different words. And by these two his life had hitherto been guided.

CHAPTER III.

THE FAMILY OF BRYE.

ON Sunday afternoon, two young men, one in the uniform of a line regiment, were walking along the Boulevard at Tourlyon, about thirty miles from the old château where Gérard de Maulévrier's life dragged so slowly on. Neither of them was much over twenty, and they were very much alike, except that the elder of the two was darker in complexion than his brother, and had the look and bearing of an older man than he really was. They were not nearly so handsome as Gérard, but far more lively and spirited-looking; and the younger one, who wore the uniform, had something of Gérard's smile. They were his two brothers, Victor and Léon de Maulévrier. They walked along talking rather gravely, having just read a letter that Victor was holding in his hand. Down below them, beyond the trees, lay the river Yonne—not the Yonne that most people know—broad and glittering in the sun. A military band was playing in the distance, the cathedral bells were chiming the hour. On the seats under the trees were men in their Sunday clothes, young smiling peasant girls, dear old grandmothers in black gowns and white plaited caps, watching over the games of little crop-headed children. The brothers also had

been sitting for a few minutes on a bench, talking over their family affairs, but when they were joined by one of these good women with her young charge, they got up and walked on.

'I know they live here sometimes,' said Léon. 'I remember how they used to go away to Tourlyon, and how little Fanni used to cry at leaving us. There was a time when she and I loved each other furiously, with passion. Then she preferred Jules, and I longed to shoot him. Gérard was too old and wise, and he always liked better to stay at home, besides, with *maman*. And you—'

'Ah, my friend, do you pretend to forget my part in the business?' said Victor. 'When I was available, you and Jules were nowhere. She was a little coquette in those days, *Mademoiselle Fanni*, but she had very good taste. How old is she now? Eighteen? When I saw her last she was a great girl in a *pinafore*, and I did not even look at her. Little I thought that she would be my sister-in-law. It is a very good arrangement. But I wonder that my mother can bear to part with even so much of Gérard.'

'Do you think they will be married in Paris?' said Léon.

'You run too fast, *mon cher*; it is still in the clouds. Who is this good man with the eyeglass? He seems to admire your handsome uniform.'

An elderly man, fat and dark, with a large white waistcoat, was slowly approaching in the shade of the trees. At a little distance he might have been a grocer, but as he came near one perceived that he was a gentleman.

'Hush!' muttered Léon. 'Don't you know him?'

As they met him, Léon took off his hat, and Victor, with sud-

den recognition, did the same. The good man put up his hand to his own, slowly and doubtfully.

'We have the honour of speaking to M. le Comte de Brye?' said Victor.

'Oui, monsieur.'

'You have forgotten us, monsieur. We are *Maulévriers*—Victor and Léon. We have not forgotten you—and days at the *Maison Blanche*.'

'My dear young fellows, I beg you a thousand pardons!' exclaimed the Comte. 'I am blind and stupid. I grow an old man; and you were boys when I saw you last. Yet your family is constantly in my thoughts, and it was only last week that I had a letter from *madame* your mother. How is she, may I ask? As beautiful as ever?'

Victor replied by equally polite inquiries for *Madame* and *Mademoiselle de Brye*. M. de Brye, with an air of sincere friendliness, begged them to come into his house, which was close by. The ladies would be delighted to see them, he said. Nothing could have pleased the young men better. They went in with him, through a bright and beautifully-kept garden, to a large white house built against the side of the hill, with a magnolia growing over the front of it. Up beyond the house a broad terrace with an alley of lime-trees ran level with the first floor; higher still was the tender green background of a vineyard. Through an arch, made by the large trees in the garden, the house had a view of the cathedral towers beyond the river and a range of far blue hills.

Monsieur de Brye took his friends into a low square salon, filled with beautiful Louis Quinze furniture, with groups of flowering plants standing in the windows. There was an air of wealth

and comfort about the place; old possessions, and yet a spirit of modern convenience that was almost Parisian, and not often found in an old provincial family.

The ladies came in almost directly. Madame de Brye was tall, thin, and pale; her manner seemed half timid, half indifferent, yet there was something interesting about her, and this, whatever it was, her daughter had inherited. She was shy and not exactly pretty, though her large soft eyes had an attractiveness of their own. Very slight, and a good deal shorter than her mother, but yet not insignificant, from a certain delicacy and refinement in her looks and movements. Both ladies were fashionably dressed, but without much taste of their own, and neither of them had much to say. Madame de Brye, most unlike a Frenchwoman, left all the talk and entertaining to her husband, who prosed away steadily.

The two young men glanced rather curiously at Françoise, as her parents called her; she sat close to her mother, and did not speak unless she was spoken to. The change from their playfellow, Fanni, of a few years ago, was great indeed. Yet now and then Victor caught a stolen glance under those long eyelashes, which convinced him that the young girl had not forgotten her childhood.

'You seldom come to Maison Blanche now, madame,' he said. 'It is a great loss to my mother.'

'It is a grief to me, indeed, not to see more of Madame de Maulévrier,' said Madame de Brye, in soft even tones. 'But that poor Maison Blanche is so far, you see, from civilisation. I do not know how we ever lived there at all. Lately we have spent our time here or in Paris, or at my old home in the south.'

'Mademoiselle has still a little love left for the Maison Blanche?' suggested Victor, looking at Françoise, who coloured slightly and bowed her head.

'Yes; she was born there. We naturally love our birthplace,' said Madame de Brye.

The faintest quiver of a smile showed itself in Mademoiselle de Brye's mouth and eyes.

'I love the old woods,' she said, half under her breath.

'And the primroses, mademoiselle, and the wild honeysuckle!' said Victor gently, looking at her. 'We shall never find such treasures again.'

'They grow there still, no doubt,' said M. de Brye. 'Yes, my friends, I have made up my mind. We spend August and September at the Maison Blanche, perhaps October too. We shall renew acquaintance with all our old friends, especially at the Château de Maulévrier. That will be charming. Our little Fanni can gather primroses and honeysuckle—'

'No, papa—blackberries and mushrooms,' murmured his daughter.

'Bien, mon enfant; whatever you please. You and I, my friends, will have shooting-parties, and your eldest brother will join us. Is he a good shot?'

'Certainly, monsieur. Gérard is a great sportsman.'

After twenty minutes of this sort of talk, the young men took their leave. Monsieur de Brye, with expressions of the warmest hospitality, walked with them to the gate on the boulevard. He had already asked them to dinner the next day.

'Then,' he said, 'we will talk politics, and give our opinions on the Republic. Ah, I have some droll stories to tell you, and a dog to show you. Such a dog! He

makes no secret of his opinions. He will bring us into trouble one of these days, when it is treason to be Royalist. I shall have to disown him, and that will not be so easy.'

'Ah no, monsieur. Give him to me, if you find him dangerous,' said Léon.

M. de Brye laughed.

'Well,' he said, 'I am very glad to have seen you both, and I beg, my dear Léon, that you will make use of my house as if I was a relation. Bring your friends with you. I like young men.'

Léon began to thank him, but he waved his hands in the air, and would not listen.

'Bah! it is not worth thanks. And, besides, it is not entirely for your sake.' He looked hard at Léon, and then at Victor, who ventured to reply with a glance of intelligence. 'You understand me? You interest me very much at this moment, for the sake of your family.'

'I expect Gérard here next week, monsieur,' said Léon in his simple way.

'Ah—well,' said the Comte, smiling, as he stood at his gate, 'I mentioned just now a little correspondence with madame your mother. She has promised me certain explanations. I shall no doubt receive them before your brother comes. A demain, my dear friends, au plaisir!'

'What a funny old man!' said Léon, as they walked away.

Victor was rather thoughtful.

'They are old-fashioned, of course,' he said, 'but he is a respectable old fellow, and Madame de Brye is distinguished, in her provincial way.'

'I should not have known Mademoiselle Fanni,' said Léon.

'I should. She is just what she promised to be. All the old spirit is there—the something, I

do not know what, that made her so attractive. By and by, you will see, she will come out astonishingly. At present, of course, she is tied hand and foot. She will develop—but I don't know what Gérard will do with her.'

'You admire her, then!' said Léon, with a note of surprise in his voice.

'Yes, I admire her.'

'I suppose M. de Brye means to consent, from what he said.'

'He is not yet quite sure about the business part of the matter. My mother has not explained to him, probably, that her younger sons are to renounce their succession. When he hears that he will be satisfied.'

Léon's mind was neither thoughtful nor suspicious enough to detect the touch of bitterness in these words.

CHAPTER IV.

A SONNET.

MADAME DE MAULÉVRIER had known very well what to expect from her three younger sons. Either of them might have insisted on his rights, and refused to give the promise she asked for, which would deprive him, in his eldest brother's favour, of everything but a small pittance. But they all seemed to agree that this course was impossible. The sacrifice was necessary, and it was made, as Gérard had prophesied, without a grimace. Madame de Maulévrier was able to write a satisfactory letter to Monsieur de Brye, and when his answer, full of friendly compliments, reached the château, it was time for Gérard to present himself to his future wife and her family. No formal arrangements were to be made till Monsieur and Madame de Brye came to the

Maison Blanche, which was not distant more than a league from Maulévrier. Then the respective parents would meet, and things would be finally concluded; in the mean time the engagement was an understood thing.

Early one morning, when the valleys were full of white mist, and the sun, already high, was slowly drinking the dew; when people and animals were just going forth to their work, Gérard and his mother stood in the high doorway of the château, waiting for the carriage that was to take him to Tourlyon.

A broad flight of steps descended into a large grass court surrounded by a carriage-drive. Opposite were the tall iron gates, once bright with gilded flourishes, now tarnished and rusty. They stood open, and through them one looked straight down the stately double avenue of limes, bright above in the morning sunlight, that played among the gold-green leaves, dark and cool in the shade below, where the road ran slightly sloping down to the village. Close to the head of the avenue, between these grand old trees, the road to the stable-yard branched off to the right. The steps and the front of the house were in shadow, but long broad rays of sun fell across the court, where two or three dogs were playing. The shutters of many of the windows were still closed. The old valet-de-chambre, in his large apron, was standing with his master's baggage at the foot of the steps.

In Madame de Maulévrier's handsome face, as she looked up at her son, there was a certain exultation. Not that she much enjoyed the prospect of a daughter-in-law; but Gérard's marriage had been a subject of thought and anxiety for several years, and she

was convinced that without her spirited management, which committed him before he knew where he was, it might have been put off for more years still. She had waited for Jules to pass his twenty-first birthday, so that all difficulties about succession might be settled at once, and then she had begun her correspondence with M. de Brye, never thinking of treating the two young people as anything but puppets, to be moved here and there for the pleasure of those who held the strings. Mademoiselle de Brye would have been a good match for anybody; and nothing could be more fortunate than her marrying Gérard. The properties joined, running into each other in all directions. The Marquis de Maulévrier had always held a good position in his province, which would now be vastly improved; and Gérard, though not a very careful young man, was free from the extravagance that had ruined his father and grandfather.

'I have seen you look more cheerful when you started for a wolf-hunt,' said Madame de Maulévrier, after watching her son for a minute or two. There was a weary indifference about him that provoked her. He stood with his hat in his hand, leaning against the doorpost, his eyes fixed absently on some distant point in the avenue.

'Well, mother, one comes back from a wolf-hunt, and things are the same.'

She had spoken with a little irritation, but his answer was so gentle in its sadness that her heart was touched, and the tears rushed into her eyes.

'But, Gérard,' she said, 'things shall always be the same for you here, as long as I live. Do you think I will let any one come between you and me? My son, if I

had nothing to think of but myself, should not we live on as we have lived all these years?

'Then, mother, once more,' said Gérard, seizing her hands, as a distant tinkle announced the carriage, 'will you not put one of the others in my place? Listen: let it be Victor.'

'No, no; no one can take your place. There, that is enough—you torment me. Some day you will thank me, my poor boy. Adieu!'

The carriage drove up, a high four-wheeled dog-cart with a pair of bays. Gérard took the reins and drove off, waving his hat to his mother as they whirled through the gates. The harness bells jingled merrily, the dogs barked as they were called and driven back, the carriage flashed away down the avenue. Madame de Maulévrier turned into the hall to take up her *paroissien*, which was lying on a table there, and presently set off on her walk to the early mass.

It was a very long round to reach Tourlyon from Maulévrier by rail. Though the distance by road was only thirty miles, or about thirteen leagues and a half, the wanderings of those cross-country lines, and the slowness and fewness of the trains upon them, made it almost a day's journey. Thus the lords of Maulévrier kept up their old fashion of driving to Tourlyon, and when, as now, they meant to be some days absent, the horses stayed one night at the town, and went back to the château the next day. In the same way they met their master on his return.

After mass, Madame de Maulévrier talked to her friend the Curé, and they rejoiced together that Gérard was gone.

'He was growing too poetic, too sensitive, our dear young Mar-

quis,' said the Curé. 'I am glad he is plunged into real life at last.'

'You have said those things before, Monsieur le Curé,' said Madame de Maulévrier, looking at him gravely. 'I could never see, for my part, that young men were the better for being thrown into the world early. Certainly you might search very far before you found a character more perfect than Gérard's. He is only too good.'

'No doubt,' the Curé agreed. 'But these new responsibilities will bring out his goodness, and strengthen his character.'

'I fervently hope they will not change him in any way.'

The Marquise wished her old friend good-morning rather shortly, and walked away.

'Poor woman!' he said, as he looked after her. 'And yet I know who one should pity most.'

Madame de Maulévrier was not at all accustomed to give way to her feelings. She had insisted on Gérard's going, though she knew well that she would be miserable when he was gone; and the Curé might well pity her, for there was not a more unhappy woman among his flock that day. Before going back to the château, she paid her almost daily visit to the little hospital she had established in the village, besides visiting one or two sick people in their own homes. When she got home at last she was hot and tired, and it was not nearly eleven o'clock. She went up-stairs, and into Gérard's room, which was at the far end of the long corridor.

Everything there was monotonously tidy; the valet de chambre had been hard at work arranging it. His books were in the shelves; his piano was shut, and the music lay in a neat pile; his bed, in a recess, was carefully veiled in its

cretonne cover and long sweeping curtains; his armchair, of a low and lazy shape, stood by one of the windows, the shutters of which were closed. Madame de Maulévrier went up and opened them; the sunshine streamed in across the shining floor, which had just been diligently frotté.

It was a grand wild view on which Gérard's windows looked. From this high point, the château seemed to be surrounded with forests. There were trees everywhere, clustering thick together, their branches heavy with the leaves of June. The country seemed to flow in waves, up and down; the village of Maulévrier lay in the nearest valley, its roofs just showing among the green. Beyond it there were steeper slopes, where the woods were chiefly fir and larch. Here and there a bright-coloured vineyard lay on the side of a hill. La Maison Blanche, M. de Brye's house, was hidden away in the woods to the right. As far as eyes could reach to the north-east, the landscape was nothing but rising and falling masses of wood; there on the horizon a yellow line divided them, crossing the top of the farthest hill. This was the road to Tourlyon, and the first and last place, on that side, from which one saw the Château de Maulévrier. From there it looked like a stately house indeed, its gray towers standing high among the woods, as if it ruled them all.

Madame de Maulévrier stood long at the window, and gazed at that distant half-mile of road, which her son had passed not long before. Presently her eyes felt a little dim with gazing at that one spot, and she let them wander over the woods, forgetting any little misgivings that might have troubled her in the pleasant

thoughts they brought to her mind. All this would be Gérard's some day. The Maulévrier estate had grown smaller by degrees, while M. de Brye's enlarged itself. Now the old name, the oldest in the country, would have its rightful preëminence again. It would have been too absurd to let Gérard's fancies interfere with such a prospect as this. As she stood at the window, thinking of the success of her plan, of her darling's bright future, of the obstacles she had overcome, of all the improvements that she would make at Maulévrier one of these days, a smile lighted up her stern face, for she felt proud of all she had done for Gérard. Then, suddenly remembering that she was wasting time here, she turned and looked round the room once more.

She was not often troubled, in her practical life, with sentimental subjective thinking, but now, as she looked round at his possessions, it crossed her mind to wonder whether this son of hers would ever understand how she loved him, how nothing in the world mattered to her, except his well-doing, his health and comfort and prosperity. He might well trust her to arrange his life for him, she thought; if ever a woman's whole powers were devoted to one object, hers were devoted to making him happy. Within certain limits—most young men would have found them very narrow ones—he lived as he pleased. He had plenty of accomplishments—music, drawing, languages—for which he had an unusual gift. His mother understood none of these things; with her stern views of life she thought them trifling, if not dangerous. His father had been singularly accomplished, and singularly unsatisfactory, in spite of having, as

she confessed, the best heart in the world. She did not wish Gérard to be like his father.

Yet she was sometimes a little proud of his talents; as now, when no one was there to see her, she walked up to the book-case and looked at the names of his books. French, English, German, Italian, Spanish, besides Latin and Greek; the best writers of every country, and especially the poets, were collected together in this young man's room. His mother glanced along the shelves, and shrugged her shoulders slightly as she turned away.

The writing-table stood close by, with its large literary-looking inkstand and blotting-book. Madame de Maulévrier raised the cover of the blotting-book. At the moment she did not think what she was doing, but her eyes fell on a sheet of paper written over, and still damp, as if it had been lately written and hastily blotted. Across the top were the words 'A mon Rêve,' the title of a sonnet which followed them, and ended with the signature 'De M.' In these lines Gérard had written his farewell to his ideal, the dream-lady that he had hoped to find some day. He knew now what he had feared and suspected before, that she was only a vision—yet, unworthy follower as he was of the great Dante, he hoped to find his Beatrice one day, in the country of realised dreams, of aspirations crowned. There he must look for the true life that was denied him here.

The sonnet was pretty and poetical enough, but any merits that it might have had were quite thrown away on Madame de Maulévrier. Neither did she in the least understand the motive of it. It seemed plain to her that Gérard was in love with somebody; evi-

dently a person he could not hope to marry. Who she was must remain a mystery. The Marquise thought over all her son's acquaintance, but could not satisfy herself, for Gérard had never expressed much admiration of any of them. It must be somebody he did not dare to mention to his mother.

Madame de Maulévrier was deeply wounded; her confidence in Gérard seemed to be slipping away. She sat down by the writing-table, with her eyes fixed on that unfortunate sheet of paper.

The time passed so quickly, as she sat there thinking of this unpleasant discovery, that she was quite startled by hearing the church-clock strike eleven, and the breakfast-bell clang out after it. She stood up, with the paper in her hand, half inclined to tear it in two, and throw it into the waste-paper basket. But more honourable counsels prevailed. She read the sonnet once again, muttered to herself, 'Mon Dieu, quelle bêtise!' laid it back in Gérard's blotting-book, closed his shutters again carefully, and left the room.

CHAPTER V.

FRANÇOISE.

IF Madame de Maulévrier had only known it, her son had written a real farewell in those lines that disturbed her so much—a farewell to the playtime of life. They were his confession that he had been dreaming long enough, that now it was time to put sleep from him, and to do the work, such as it was, that lay before him in the world. When he wrote them, Gérard had made up his mind to accept the inevitable. His resolution had failed a little at the

moment of going, but it became strong again in the long lonely drive to Tourlyon.

His spirits rose as he drove through those sweet-scented forest ways, where the horses started at every shadow, where now and then a deer bounded across the road, or some wild bird fluttered away in the underwood. No other living creature was to be met for miles, except, perhaps, a party of woodcutters, or a garde champêtre with his dogs, whose work led them deep into the forest.

The good horses with their light load brought their master to Tourlyon in time for a late breakfast. As he drove through the streets of the beautiful old town, with its shining river and church towers and picturesque houses, under a deep blue sky that gave its full effect to every colour and shadow, his artist soul was delighted, and he did not feel any shrinking from his fellow creatures who made the life and movement of those streets. When he turned into the yard of the Couronne, the old well-known hotel, it was pleasant to find his brothers waiting there to welcome him.

Victor had a long leave just now. He meant to come to Maulévrier by and by to see his mother; but at present it was more amusing to stay at the Tourlyon hotel, spending his time with Léon and his brother officers, or at M. de Brye's pretty house, where he was made very welcome. He thought it only right, he told Léon, to cultivate these people, who were so soon to be relations.

'We shall expect madame our sister-in-law to make Maulévrier pleasant to us, one of these days,' he said. 'One cannot be too polite beforehand.'

Léon, whose colonel was a mar-

tinet, had not so much time for paying visits to his friends.

It was Victor who went with Gérard that afternoon to M. de Brye's, entertaining him on the way with praises of the Brye family. Gérard listened with interest. He had made up his mind to like them, these 'excellent people,' and to make Mdlle. Françoise like him, if that was possible. He was very modest about himself, and not at all aware of his own attractiveness. 'Such looks as his might have charmed much more experienced people than Mdlle. de Brye.

She scarcely lifted her eyes when he was introduced to her, and did not speak, but blushed faintly and glanced at her mother when he kissed her hand. Monsieur and Madame de Brye both seemed delighted; the stiff silent lady found smiles for Gérard, who hardly knew himself as he sat there making agreeable speeches to her and her husband. Victor sat a little apart, and smiled under his moustache. Could that be moping old Gérard, that splendid fellow with his grand seigneur air, talking to these good folks with such animation, as if their opinion was of immense consequence to him? Both young men, Victor perhaps oftener than Gérard, let their eyes wander towards Mdlle. Françoise, their chief object of interest, who sat there demurely looking on the floor. Victor's glances were curious, eager, sympathetic; Gérard's merely polite and deferential; but both were thrown away.

M. de Brye was full of benevolence. He called his poodle, and made him perform various tricks to amuse the visitors.

'Qu'est-ce qu'on fait quand on parle politique?' demanded the master of this clever animal, who instantly yawned in the most dis-

mal and depressing manner. At the word '*République*,' he rolled over on his back and lay helpless. After this he descended to more commonplace tricks, such as sitting up with a pipe in his mouth and a newspaper in his paws. These performances went on in the middle of the salon, M. de Brye presiding with the greatest animation, while his wife sat by and smiled, the visitors laughed and admired, and Françoise looked a little bored. In the middle of the pipe and newspaper exhibition, Gérard met her eyes, and was struck by their expression; but she instantly looked away from him again. There was a certain sadness in that momentary glance that haunted and troubled him.

Presently Madame de Brye invited them all into the garden to see her orange-trees in flower. Monsieur de Brye seized the opportunity to take Gérard aside, and thank him in majestic terms for the honour he had done him in asking for his daughter.

'On the contrary, monsieur,' said Gérard; 'I owe you a thousand thanks for the honour you do me, and for receiving me so kindly.'

Monsieur de Brye bowed and smiled.

'I shall wait impatiently,' said Gérard in a low voice, 'for my answer.'

'You need not be anxious on that point,' said Monsieur de Brye; 'my daughter knows what her parents have arranged for her.'

'Still, it must be decided by herself,' said Gérard earnestly. 'When we are better acquainted—'

'Ah, yes! then you can ask her what questions you please,' said M. de Brye, with a friendly smile. 'But, in the meanwhile,

do not disturb yourself. Make acquaintance, as you say. Her mother will let you have a little talk together.'

Monsieur de Brye thought that there was something prophetic in his chosen son-in-law's anxiety, when, after the young men were gone, he went to his daughter, and found her standing in the garden pulling a rose to pieces with a discontented air.

'Well, my little Fanni,' said her father cheerfully; 'are you happy, my child? Why are you destroying that poor flower?'

'It was dead,' said Fanni, twirling it round in her fingers and throwing it away. 'It made me dismal, papa. I don't like dismal things, you see.'

She lifted her large eyes slowly, and looked up into his good-natured puzzled face.

'I detest melancholy people,' she said; 'they kill me. I am not cheerful enough myself to endure them. I love you, papa, because you are always laughing.'

'What a character!' said M. de Brye. 'One would think I was a sad old goose indeed. But what a droll child you are to talk like this to-day, when you ought to be the happiest girl in the world.'

'Ought I?' said Fanni. She looked away and sighed.

'Ta-ta! Of course you ought. A young hero; voyons, seriously—your mother does not like us to talk nonsense—does Monsieur de Maulévrier please you, my child? He is dying to know his fate, poor fellow!'

'His fate!—what fate?' said Fanni, half to herself.

Perhaps M. de Brye thought he was indiscreet in even hinting to his daughter that the decision lay, after all, in her own hands.

'It will be a happy fate, I am sure,' he said, prudently retiring.

'He is a fine young man, and he has brought good manners from that lonely old place of his. There is something simple and honest about him, too, that pleases me.'

Françoise did not contradict her father, but she made a little face which he did not see.

M. de Brye said no more, finding it a dangerous subject. He was rather disturbed, but determined to leave things to settle themselves. Gérard's good looks were certain to make their way, he thought, and if the girl took it into her head to be fanciful, then would be the time for parental authority to appear on the scene. So he said nothing even to his wife about Fanni's odd manner, and contented himself with praising the young Marquis.

Gérard was a good deal with them during the next few days. He wrote a cheerful letter to his mother, in which he told her that he thought she would be pleased with Mlle. de Brye; she was a decidedly pretty little person in her own peculiar way; she was distinguished and graceful. He had not talked much to her yet, but he thought she had a certain amount of esprit; certainly she was not dull, though she looked at times a little sad. Her dress was always perfect in itself, though she now and then wore a colour that did not suit her complexion.

It was not a very lover-like letter, but what could one expect under the circumstances? Madame de Maulévrier felt that she could not look for more than this, after reading her son's farewell to that hopeless love of his. Her heart had softened towards him again, there in her loneliness. She felt sure that, once he was safely married to this girl, whom he evidently did not dislike,

everything would go well, all anxieties would cease.

It was a fact that Gérard was anything but miserable in those summer days that he spent at Tourlyon, driving about, walking, dining, spending long evenings with the De Brye family, sometimes with one or both of his brothers, sometimes alone. It was such a complete change from his solitary life at Maulévrier. M. de Brye was not a learned man, certainly, but he was good-natured and amusing. Madame de Brye was gracious and kind. Françoise was a riddle; the little shade of mystery she managed to throw round herself interested Gérard, though she seldom spoke to him, or indeed to any one when he was there. Yet now and then he caught one of those strange glances, in which he began to fancy that there was feeling of some sort. Sometimes he thought it was dislike. Then he told himself that no doubt she, too, felt the awkwardness of their position; two people meeting and parting like strangers, knowing that they were soon to be together for life. Gérard had a shy nature, and he began to feel positively afraid of that quiet girl who moved about the house, seemingly unconscious that his eyes were following her. At the same time the feeling grew stronger and stronger that he *must* speak to her, that this wall must be broken down, if there was to be any peace for either of them. He wanted to understand her, to know what she thought of him; it was unflattering, besides, to be treated with such indifference. So at last, calling one day on Madame de Brye, he asked suddenly whether he might have an interview with Mademoiselle Françoise.

'I shall be very glad,' said Madame de Brye, who was not

without her own little anxieties; and after a pause, she added, 'Françoise is in the garden. We will go out to her, and you can ask her to walk with you on the terrace.'

Then, as she led the way out of the room, she stopped and turned round, fixing her pale eyes upon him. 'I have been wishing that you and Françoise should know more of each other,' she said.

'I hope Mademoiselle de Brye has not—any prejudice against me!' said Gérard.

'Prejudice!' repeated Madame de Brye, raising her eyebrows. 'She does not know what such a thing means. She is reserved, like other girls.'

On the garden terrace, at the end of the alley of limes, there was a stone summer-house, where Mademoiselle de Brye sat at work, attended by her *bonne*. When Madame de Brye and Gérard appeared, this woman got up and went away.

The wavering shadows of the limes, the faint sweet scent of their flowers, took Gérard's thoughts suddenly home to Maulévrier, and a momentary horror of his future life came over him. That old home could never be the same again. Everywhere he would meet the doubtful, half-reproachful look of Françoise's eyes, see her small figure moving gently, hear the rustle of her gown, and her low voice with its note of discontent. He had time to think this while he walked with Madame de Brye along the lime-shaded terrace, and then to be angry with himself for the thought. Instead of mourning over himself, ought he not rather to pity this girl, who also must accept the inevitable, to make her fate as easy to her as he could?

Françoise got up and joined

him silently. Her mother took up the work she had laid down, and sat there in the summer-house, while the two young people strolled away under the trees. Gérard remarked on the sweetness of the limes, and asked Françoise if she remembered the avenue at Maulévrier. Yes, she said, very well, and then she reminded him that she had been seldom at Maulévrier; that his brothers used to come to La Maison Blanche when they were boys; 'but not you, nor madame your mother. At least, not often. I never knew you.'

'It is very true, mademoiselle,' said Gérard. 'We saw each other sometimes, but little thought then—you know me better now.'

'Do I?' said Françoise. It was one of her doubtful looks put into words, nothing more, for she was looking away from him.

They were standing where the sunny garden lay smiling below them, and beyond that the river, and the old houses piled together on the other side, the gray cathedral towers rising in the midst of them.

The air was hot and clear; not one dark shadow of smoke dimmed the brightness of the sky that arched over Tourlyon. Bells were chiming in the distance, and above the heads of the two young people bees hummed in the limes. Everything seemed full of joy in that light and wealth of summer, and of all living things those two should have been the happiest. Gérard stood with his arms folded, his pale dark face bent towards his companion, his eyes fixed upon her with melancholy concern, while she looked straight away into the distance.

'I am afraid you do not,' said Gérard presently. 'Yet it would be better, would it not, to understand each other? I certainly do

not know you, and I cannot help fearing sometimes that you dislike me. It makes me very unhappy.'

Françoise blushed, and smiled a little. 'What have I done to make you think so?' she said.

'Nothing,' said Gérard. 'But I feel it, and you do not say that I am mistaken.'

Françoise was silent; perhaps she felt a little frightened; such plain speaking was hardly to have been expected from her grave and graceful 'futur.'

'This arrangement that has been made for us,' he went on after a minute or two, 'is it, perhaps, disagreeable to you, mademoiselle? Trust me, it shall not be carried out against your will, if you will only tell me the truth.'

'It is impossible — now — to alter,' murmured Françoise.

'Not at all. Nothing that you wish is impossible,' said Gérard.

But she had learnt more of the world in her Paris convent than he in his country home, and she knew that a fancy of hers would not easily alter the agreement that their parents had made. Monsieur and Madame de Brye were quite free from any new-fashioned ideas on this subject; they would do what they pleased with their child's life, and no doubt Madame de Maulévrier's views were the same. Gérard looked at things from the romance standpoint, which was very different. The earnestness of his last words struck and pleased her. She ventured to look up at him, and though there was certainly no love in the dark expressive eyes that met hers, their depth of honour and kindness was a treasure in itself. But what a depth of sadness, too! That vexed Françoise, and made her turn her head away again. He might look more cheerful, she thought, now that he had what he wanted. She knew all about

the Maulévrier property, and how it would be improved by his marriage with her. It never occurred to her that his heart's consent as well as hers was wanting. Of course, if he had not wished it, he would never have allowed himself to be proposed to her.

'It is possible, if you wish it,' said Gérard, as she did not answer him.

Françoise shook her head gently.

'I do not,' she said.

He did not thank her for this assurance; he received it in grave silence. Presently he said,

'If that is the case, we ought certainly to be better friends than we are. I should like you to talk to me openly, if you will. I wish to make you happy, and I should like you to tell me how. I only wish to please you.'

A hopeful light dawned in Françoise's eyes. Gérard saw it, and responded to it with the rare sweet smile which sometimes made his face so beautiful.

'I mean it, dear mademoiselle,' he said. 'Could you have imagined anything else? Ah, yes, I have ideas, and you will help me to carry them out. It shall be the most perfect friendship; we will hide nothing from each other. I have often thought of it, and if I am to find it after all—'

She looked at him with a sort of eager inspiration in her face.

For a moment Gérard thought he was dreaming. Could this be Mademoiselle de Brye!

'Monsieur!' she exclaimed, with a little sigh of rapture; 'then we shall not have to live at Maulévrier?'

Gérard felt as if he had been trying in his dream to gather grapes from thorns, and as if a wound from the thorns had wakened him painfully. He coloured, and answered her with a shade of sternness.

'My home must be with my mother at Maulévrier.'

'Ah! Then you did not mean it. You only said it to flatter me!'

'What did I say, mademoiselle?'

'You have forgotten already! You have not much memory,' she said, laughing, and turning away from him.

She would hardly speak to him again; though he, poor fellow, anxious to retrieve lost ground, assured her that she could go away from Maulévrier whenever she pleased; he had no wish to make it a prison to her. Françoise cared for no explanations, and Gérard was too proud and too truthful to contradict himself. So their first interview ended badly. Madame de Brye saw that something had happened, though she was wise enough to make no remarks.

It was getting late in the afternoon as the Marquis de Maulévrier walked back into the town, and turned into the courtyard of La Couronne. He was profoundly sad, and all the bright pictures of the streets were lost upon him. He had thought that, though there was to be no rose in life for him, there might be other flowers, and he had resolved to make himself content with these. But now it seemed as if they were nothing but scentless weeds after all. The old disgust and weariness were again taking possession of him. Once more this heartless marriage lay on his mind like a weight. Françoise would indeed have been in despair if she had seen the pale stern face, the downcast melancholy eyes of her future husband, as he turned under the old porte-

cochère into the courtyard of the hotel.

The way was partly blocked up by an omnibus and one or two cabs. A train had lately come in, and several sets of travellers were arriving. Servants were bustling about, and there was some confusion and a good deal of loud talking, as the luggage was taken down and carried in.

Two English ladies were standing at the door, waiting for a tall man belonging to them, who was looking after his baggage and paying the cabman. The ladies were both tall; they looked like mother and daughter. Gérard, going into the house, had to pass close to the younger one; as he did so he took off his hat. She bowed her head slightly in acknowledgment of his politeness, and at that moment they looked straight into each other's face. Both were struck—she, with the sad hopelessness of the handsomest French face she had ever seen; he, with what appeared to him her great beauty, and, more, with the thought and feeling, the frank serene interest in what she was looking at, which he managed to see in that one glance of her blue eyes. He had never seen that look in a woman's face before, and yet he seemed to know it very well. Poor Gérard! He passed on with bent head into the house, hardly knowing what he was doing or what had happened. It was almost like a miracle. A dream had put itself into human form, and shown itself to him in open day. It might as well have stayed in dreamland, where it could be worshipped peacefully and without distraction.

(To be continued.)

'GOLDEN GIRLS.'

A Picture-Gallery.

BY ALAN MUIR, AUTHOR OF 'CHILDREN'S CHILDREN,' 'LADY BEAUTY ;
OR CHARMING TO HER LATEST DAY,' ETC.

Introductory.

I.

A PROLOGUE SPOKEN BY
MR. AUTHOR.

I HAVE to tell you the story of two girls who, in early childhood, were left without father or mother, and at the same time inheritors of a vast fortune. These children were placed under the guardianship of a distant relative, who had neither moral nor intellectual qualities to fit him for his important trust. The facts of their fortune were unhappily well known, and from the first day they were left orphans the two were made victims of various plots, each of which had the same end—the acquisition of the property of the children. These plots were scarcely the less dangerous to the young girls' peace because the method by which the schemers hoped to secure the money was, in every case, the marriage of the girls to certain chosen persons. Now, here, in a few words, is the argument of this novel of *Golden Girls*. How can I tell, reader, whether I shall secure your attention or not? The opening chapters must in any case be dull, for the interest will entirely depend upon the characters, and to awaken an interest in characters all at once is as hard as to establish a true and rational friendship in a railway carriage. Accordingly I begin my story with great diffidence; and this feeling is increased by

taking itself is apt to lead to satirical and even ill-natured comments on men and women and human life. Lest, then, I should be thought a cynic, I may tell you, reader, that after having passed many years in attentive study of mankind I am growing less disposed to misanthropy every year I live. I have, indeed, found that in the best characters—the most sincerely self-forgetting and religious—there are ineradicable blemishes; but I have found, too, that none are wholly bad, a discovery which gives more comfort than its opposite can possibly give pain. I find the humorous view of life, let serious people say what they please, wholesome in many circumstances, second only in value to the pathetic. I laugh and weep alternately as I write. Reader, if I can but move you to one-tenth of the merry or serious emotion that I feel as I write, believe me when you lay down this book you will say, 'This author is no bad fellow.' One thing I promise you—you shall not be entrapped into a moral tale. Exactly what happened I will tell you, quite irrespective of any possible moral or immoral lesson. Reader, if by a tweak of the nose I could transform one of my characters from a villain to a hero, I would not tweak his nose. In this story men and women shall seem what they are, and speak as they spoke.

Now, I shall, with your permission, set before you three short introductory scenes, disconnected

from each other, but still serviceable to the narrative ; and this done, we shall start fairly on our story of **GOLDEN GIRLS.**

Introductory.

II.

A FIGHT OF LOVE WITH FATE : FATE WINNING.

A Swiss-Italian lake. On the very edge of the waters stood a large house, and the waves kept rising and falling with the utmost gentleness against its walls. The air was full of summer, and far away, beyond the great space of still hot atmosphere, the white majestic line of the Swiss Alps dimly traversed the sky. All was quiet, for it was the heat of the day, and man and Nature alike were lulled in a warm sleep.

Only in a room of this lake-house, where an open window showed the stretch of quiet water, were three people who had nothing either of Switzerland or Italy about them. The first was a lady of about five-and-twenty, of rare beauty, with the whitest skin, the softest chestnut hair, the loveliest eyes of blue. Her face and form might kindle many an enamoured thought in a man's breast, were it not for an unearthly look which pervaded her whole aspect. Her face was fined by wasting disease ; the colour on her cheeks which kindled her loveliness into such brightness was the fire of death ; the brilliancy in her great eyes was of the sort that must soon be quenched ; the hand lying carelessly on the satin coverlet had been chiselled to its delicacy by consumption. Yes ; every thought of life and love would die in your breast as you regarded her ; for her marvellous beauty was so full of decline and early sunset that you would think no more of tender

vows, or stolen kisses, or wedding-bells, but of the unseen kingdom to which the lady is going, where they neither marry nor are given in marriage.

Beside the sick lady stood a small child's bed, and on it lay a little girl of five or six, with hair which fell down in great dark tresses, big soft eyes of gray, and an almond-shaped face which, touched as it was with melancholy, seemed remarkable in so young a creature. This child was sick too, and her toys were spread on the quilt beside her, and she was busy arranging one of her dolls on the pillow, talking to it all the while with great volubility.

The second girl was older—nine, perhaps—and of a true English style like the sick lady, chestnut and blue, only her beauty did not promise fully to equal her mother's. She was hard at work sewing an apron for the doll which her sister was composing to sleep.

'Mildred,' the mother said, speaking in a faint and weary voice, 'I want to say a few words to you and Violet. I may not be strong enough to-morrow. I am going away from you both, darlings.'

The elder girl bent over her sewing, as if she knew something ; but the little one stopped in her play with the doll, and looked up in great surprise.

'Going away, mamma ? But you will not be long ?'

'I shall not see you, darlings, not either of you, for a long time,' the sick lady answered, taking little Violet's hand in her own. 'God is going to take me away to heaven.'

'Can't we go too, mamma ?' asked little Violet, still looking at her mother in fixed wonder. 'You never go anywhere without us.'

'After a little while,' the mother replied.

'To-morrow, I daresay, perhaps

this evening,' little Violet said, quite comforted, and turning to her doll again. 'Now, dolly, lie still where I put you.'

'Mildred,' the mother said, addressing the elder girl, who still bent over her little bit of sewing, so that her face could not be seen, 'when I am taken away you and little Violet will go back to England, and you will live near the church where dear papa is buried; and they will carry me and put me beside him, and you and Violet can bring flowers and lay them there on summer evenings.'

'And you will see us then, won't you, mamma?' little Violet asked, looking up from her doll, for the last words caught her ears.

'I shall be very far off,' the mother answered. 'I am going to papa, Violet. God is going to take me away to him.'

'And why won't God take us too, mamma?' asked Violet, who had lost all interest in her doll for the time. 'Then we should all be together again, and papa would ride me on his shoulder.'

'And, Mildred, you must try and remember what I am saying to you,' the dying lady continued, speaking with difficulty, for a cough harassed her at every breath. 'You and Violet will be very, very rich, and you will not have papa or myself to take care of you; and, darling, you will have to take care of little Violet as she grows up, and try to make her stronger, and see that she has always nice things to eat; and you must promise me that every morning you will make her kneel down with you, and then you and she are to say that little prayer I taught you about being good and kind, and asking God to keep you from what is wrong and naughty, and to bring you at last to papa and mamma.'

'Will He?' asked little Violet, whose gray eyes were full of

wonder. 'Will it be a nice place, as nice as this?'

'A great deal nicer than this, Violet,' the mother answered, holding her little girl's hand very fast. 'The sun is always shining, and the people are always singing, and nobody ever is sick, and nobody ever cries; and then we shall all four be quite happy, and never leave each other again.'

'But why can't me and Milly go now, mamma?' little Violet persisted.

'Because, my darling, you have to live here for a long time, and be very rich, and know a great many people, and do all sorts of things, and you will be very, very happy, I hope; and then, when it is all over, if you have been very good, God will bring you safe to papa and myself.'

For the moment little Violet was satisfied, and the mother once again tried to speak to Mildred.

'You must take care of Violet, darling; you are the elder; you understand a great deal more than she does. You must be like mamma to little Violet when mamma herself is gone for ever.'

Violet was her mother's darling, and now the poor lady's voice began to tremble and to break.

Brave little Mildred, who realised the dreadful truth, had all this time been bending over her work, and with great firmness had been biting her lips and keeping back her tears. But now her resolution quite gave way; the tremor of her mother's voice overcame her. Throwing down the apron, she cast her arms about her mother's neck, sobbing piteously.

'Mamma, mamma! don't go! Don't leave us! stay a little longer! O, mamma, mamma!'

At sight of her sister's sorrow little Violet burst out crying too, and the mother, unable any longer to restrain her own grief, bowed

her head over Mildred, caressing the child, but weeping as she did so. There these three sorrowing creatures were. Outside spread the still waters and the bright sunshine, and far away the belt of snowy hills; but they heeded not the landscape of glory and peace. Why should they? And yet the whole scene might have been taken for a figure of what our good poets sing—that outside and around the great spectacle of earthly sorrow there lies, unseen, an embracing circle of divine love and joy.

Introductions.

III.

A FIGHT OF FLATTERY WITH FOLLY,
FLATTERY WINNING.

THE suburb of an English town. In a handsome drawing-room, furnished, however, with more profusion than taste, four persons sat together—a tall, imposing, old-fashioned, elderly man; a woman about thirty-five, richly clad, and of a very good style of matronly beauty; a meagre pinched man of fifty, with shoulders shrivelled up very high, and a general expression which suggested that he chose this way of keeping his ears warm, because it was cheap; a small boy of a dollish prettiness, who occupied himself with card castles, and was occasionally regarded with great interest by the three elders.

'O Jerome,' the lady said, with a bland and sycophantic smile, 'you are too clever; you are too severe; one feels quite afraid of you.'

This insinuating speech was an answer to some remark made by the old-fashioned gentleman; he seemed much gratified.

'Do not say clever!' he cried,

chuckling with much enjoyment. 'Do not say severe. You don't mean it. Beatrice,' he added, looking at the lady, 'do you really think, now, that I am clever and severe?'

'I know what Daniel and I always say,' Beatrice replied, judging a little bit of work as she spread it out on the table before her; 'we always say—'

'What?' the old-fashioned gentleman asked, greatly interested, and the more so because she stopped.

'Why,' Daniel remarked, rising from an account-book over which he had been poring, and walking to the fireplace, where, as if by habit, he put his hands behind his back, although it was summer, 'we always say that for a clear head, a cool judgment, and a sharp eye for a knave or a fool, there is nobody in England like Jerome Dawe.'

'That is what you say, is it?' Jerome Dawe exclaimed, roaring with laughter, and slapping his knee in his delight. 'But you don't really mean it, Daniel—not altogether! A cool head! a clear judgment! a sharp eye for a knave or a fool!—eh? Well, I won't say, but I have put my finger on a fool or two in my life—and a knave!'

'This I can say,' Daniel continued, speaking slowly and checking off his thoughts on his fingers to mark the accuracy with which his mind was working, 'in the course of a long life I have never, never met your match, Jerome, so far as headpiece goes.'

Jerome Dawe burst out laughing anew, and slapped his leg once more.

'You don't mean it, Daniel! I do not believe you mean it! I should like to hear you say it again, just to see if you mean it. So far as headpiece goes—eh? Well, well, I will not say that I have not some-

thing of the kind between my shoulders.'

'I know this,' Beatrice said, looking up at Jerome Dawe with great composure, 'if you could but hear what Daniel says of you in private! He won't now, when you are here; but if you heard him in private, I think you would be flattered.'

'Flattered, should I?' repeated Jerome Dawe. 'Don't repeat anything to me, Beatrice, for I hate flattery! What he says of me in private, eh?'

'Shall I tell you what he said last night?' the lady rejoined, looking candour itself as she fixed her eyes on Jerome Dawe. 'We were talking about yourself and your brother, and Daniel said—'

'Beatrice!' Daniel called out from the hearthrug, 'I will not allow this. I forbid you to say another word.'

The lady laughed with great good-humour.

'Shall I obey him, Jerome?' she asked.

'It's a delicate matter,' replied Jerome jocosely. "'Never interfere between man and wife" is my rule. Still, Beatrice, if you don't mind whispering in my ear—'

So, entering into the humour of his suggestion, Jerome Dawe bent his head close to Beatrice, while Daniel called out again in a serious voice,

'Now, mind! I have said you shall not repeat it.'

However, beyond this, Daniel made no movement to interfere, and Jerome Dawe put his ear close to the lady's lips, like a pitcher to a dropping well, and she whispered a long sentence.

'What was the last word?' inquired Jerome Dawe, having missed one particular morsel. Beatrice repeated something in his ear.

'Said *that*, did he?' Jerome Dawe exclaimed, lifting up a face

radiant with delight. 'Daniel said that to you? Last night, too? O Daniel, you dog, what a judge of character you are!'

In the abundance of his gratification Jerome Dawe made as if he would give Daniel a facetious poke in the ribs, an overture which Daniel received sulkily.

'I don't approve of this sort of thing,' he said. 'It was wrong of Beatrice, and wrong of you, Jerome.'

'Why, how do you know what she has been saying?' Jerome Dawe replied more facetiously than ever. 'Perhaps she only told me the day of the month!'

'There he goes again, Beatrice!' Daniel remarked to his wife, quite struck by this clever diversion on the part of Jerome Dawe. 'You cannot have him! You *cannot* have him!'

He struck his palm with his knuckles to express his admiration with greater force; and Jerome Dawe chuckled and rubbed his hands together and twinkled his eyes and looked a wondrous clever fellow, with a dash of good-nature about him, strong and apt, and facetious through it all, you know.

'Now, Jerome,' Daniel remarked, assuming a business face all at once, 'I want to have a little talk with you about these Walsingham children. How is the mother?'

'She died last week,' Jerome Dawe answered. 'I was just going to tell you. I had a letter from her maid this morning.'

'And those poor orphan girls—where are they?' inquired Daniel.

'On their way to England,' the other replied. 'I must take them in for a few days, and then make arrangements for the future.'

'You are sole guardian, I believe?' Daniel remarked interrogatively.

'Sole guardian,' Jerome Dawe answered, with importance. 'And

let me tell you, Daniel, where such a great fortune is concerned guardianship is no trifle.'

'What may the fortune be?' Daniel asked, seeming, however, to lose interest in the conversation, for he returned to his account-book, and weighed its columns, and calculated with his lips.

'One hundred thousand apiece—that at this moment,' said Jerome Dawe. 'In ten years' time, when the money has rolled over and over, no one can say what it will be.'

'A fortune like that—rolling over and over,' Daniel remarked. 'Five and five are ten, and five fifteen'—for so little did he seem to care about the fortune that he fell back into his own figures. 'A fortune of this kind rolling over and over, as you say, might in ten years amount to a quarter of a million. By the way, Jerome, did you not mention that one daughter is delicate?'

'Yes, the younger—Violet. The mother told me some time ago that she was afraid Violet would never live to be a woman.'

'In that case,' replied Daniel, still figuring away and inserting small addition sums in his talk, 'the other girl will be worth—four and three are seven—a quarter of a million when she comes of age—five from eight leaves three. A nice fortune for somebody.'

But Daniel did not manifest any interest whatever in this quarter of a million. It was no concern of his. Of course not.

'How old is the elder girl?' Daniel asked once more, after fresh acts of addition and subtraction. He glanced at his little son, who was absorbed in his card castles.

'The elder girl is nine,' replied Jerome Dawe. 'Nine and one month.'

'Just two years younger than Eugene,' Daniel remarked, still with his eyes on his son. 'Yes, as you say, Jerome, it will be a charge—an onerous charge. I am glad it is you, not me, who has the care of those children.'

'Nonsense, Daniel!' Beatrice cried out, interposing with an air of impatience. 'Charge, indeed! As if Jerome were not equal to such a thing! Some men might blunder. Jerome will be father—mother—guardian—friend—everything to those girls.'

'You think so, Beatrice, do you?' Jerome Dawe remarked. 'You think I will manage? Father—mother—guardian—friend—eh? Well, perhaps I will. Some men might blunder—eh? Well, perhaps they might, Beatrice—perhaps they might.'

'But this is such a *very* extraordinary case,' Daniel replied, shaking his head with an air of mistrust. 'How to bring those girls up—how to shield them from designing people and adventurers; why, they will be courted before they are in their teens! Where there is money, Jerome, people will do anything. O money, money!'

'Leave the girls to me,' Jerome Dawe said confidently. 'I have my own plan for bringing them up; my own settled plan for keeping them in seclusion and out of harm's way. I will tell you what it is, and you will not call me a stupid fellow.'

Daniel looked blank at this announcement.

'Settled a plan already, Jerome?'

'Yes, settled a plan already!' answered Jerome triumphantly. 'Listen to it—'

'I have found you out!' the lady exclaimed, interrupting him suddenly, and throwing up her hands in admiration. 'I know the plan! Well, Jerome, for a

far-sighted man you exceed everybody I have ever met !

'You cannot know my plan, Beatrice,' said Jerome Dawe, looking at her in surprise 'That is impossible.'

'I know it, Jerome,' she answered. 'I see it all. Splendid idea ! Capital idea ! Just such an idea as would occur to a man like yourself. Still, Jerome, there will be obstacles in the way : I see obstacles in the way.'

'Beatrice,' cried Jerome Dawe, 'you cannot know my plan. It does not concern anybody with whom you are acquainted. I will tell you all about it in ten words, and then you will see—'

'I know ! I know !' the lady cried, running on in great haste, and determined that he should not have the first word. 'You want Daniel and myself to bring up the children. You have settled that we are to take them. O Jerome, what a man you are ! It is really dangerous to have to do with you, you are so clever in all you do !'

'Beatrice,' cried Jerome Dawe again, and this time solemnly, 'such an idea never entered my mind.'

'Look at his eye, Daniel !' the lady cried. She was now at Jerome Dawe's side, caressing him. 'Look at the twinkle in his eye ! Which are we to believe ? The tongue or the eye ? the clever tongue or the twinkling eye ? O Jerome, Jerome, not to tell us before !'

Jerome Dawe did not speak for a minute, and was apparently collecting himself for an effort. Then looking at the lady with a roguish expression, he said,

'You think it was clever, do you ?'

'O Jerome ! Jerome !' she cried again, as if regular speech would fail to measure his craft. 'You are too deep for us altogether !'

'I kept my secret well, did I ?' Jerome Dawe asked, seeming more and more to recover himself.

'You guessed nothing ?'

'Never, till ten minutes ago,' she answered.

'I am a sly fellow, am I ?' Jerome Dawe inquired, chuckling. 'You would call me a sly fellow, eh ?'

'Too sly for me,' Daniel remarked, in a tone of unfeigned admiration. 'But it will not do, Jerome. We could not take these children.'

'Why not, Dan ?' asked Jerome Dawe. 'Your reason ?'

'Well, you see,' replied Daniel, in a hesitating way, 'there are threescore and ten objections. It would be—it would seem—well, I do not quite know where to begin. Perhaps I may be wrong. Only I do not like the thing, Jerome—I do not like the thing.'

'Daniel,' said Beatrice, with a reproving air, 'if Jerome thinks it wise, we may trust his judgment. What is the use of saying every day that we rely on his opinion, and then refusing to act upon it at the first moment of apparent difficulty ?'

'Well,' Daniel replied, pondering hard, 'we must think it over. We must be guided by Jerome. There is one thing, the elder girl would be a nice play-mate for Eugene.'

Every reader has seen that the idea of thus providing for his wards had never even crossed the mind of Jerome Dawe. And yet now he half believed that the arrangement, into which he had been thus blandly and scientifically inveigled, was of his own devising. And this pompous, shallow, and ductile Ass is the keeper and the guardian of our dear little Golden Girls !

Introduction.

IV.

A FIGHT OF A GREAT MAN WITH A
SMALL BOY, NEITHER WINNING.

In one corner of an ill-furnished bedroom, which the slanting ceiling showed to be at the top of a house, there stood, in a sullen attitude, a boy of eleven or twelve. Sullen is the word to describe both his attitude and his face, and yet he seemed a lad not ignoble by nature. His hair was matted over his forehead, as if he had been struggling and crying; his dress was dusty and disordered; and his hands and cheeks alike were sorely in need of washing. Yet it was a taking face after all, ready for good-nature, and lit by a pair of eyes of honest brown. The lad's frame, too, was a fine one, broad-chested, and with many a sign of approaching manly vigour. Such a boy one of our wise and thoughtful English mothers would regard with anxiety and reflection, and would resolve to guide him now with indulgence and now with kind repression, kindling his affections, guiding his strong physical nature into wholesome channels, and driving backward the brutish part of his disposition. For in this boy any penetrating eye can see there is what, for lack of a finer word, one must call a brutish part; and the next few years will either draw it into ruinous predominance, or fix it within safe boundaries of self-restraint and virtue and honour, making it the spring of energy for a noble and happy life.

For this boy there was at present no motherly care. He stood crouched in the corner, dirty, savage, glaring. The brutish part was coming out pretty strongly at that particular moment.

Opposite to him, a black stick

held menacingly in his hand, his whole bearing expressing aversion and reproof, stood the portly Jerome Dawe. Mingling with his punitive air there was something of alarm, as if the boy were a kind of wild cat, who might make a sudden leap and do mischief.

'You are a rogue,' said Jerome Dawe. 'Roguery, roguery is a detestable thing!'

'I am not a rogue, no more than you!' the boy answered, in just the tone one would expect.

'You took that five-shilling piece off my library table this morning,' Jerome Dawe continued. 'Don't add sin to sin, Sholto. You know you took it.'

'I never saw it,' the boy cried. 'I did not go into the library all day.'

'You took that five shillings!' Jerome Dawe repeated, with dogged grandeur. 'I am as sure that you took it as if I had seen you. How do you know, Sholto, but I did see you?'

'You could not have seen me!' the boy answered back furiously, 'and you could not say you saw me without telling a lie!'

'For daring to talk to me about telling a lie,' retorted Jerome Dawe, with awful solemnity, 'you shall stay here till this time to-morrow, and live on bread-and-water. If you had confessed and been repentant, I might have forgiven you. As it is, here you stay, Sholto, and we will see if you talk about my telling lies to-morrow.'

'I tell you what,' shrieked the boy, as Jerome Dawe was preparing to leave the room, 'you are what my father always called you.'

'What was that?' Jerome Dawe demanded, indignant, but curious.

'A bully, selfish, cruel, vain!'

the boy went on, almost insane in his fury and grief. 'He said you cared for nobody but those Ruddocks; and that for them you would sacrifice everybody you knew; and that you only cared for them because they flattered you; and that they could flatter you as much as they liked, you are such a fool—there!'

'Did your father, did my brother, say all that?' Jerome Dawe asked, thunderstruck by this cannonade of compliments. 'Did he dare to say all that?'

'Yes, and it's true, every word!' the boy answered, still in the same headlong way. 'And that is just how you treat me. Eugene is everything, and what is Eugene to you? And no matter what I do, I cannot please you, and I will never try again as long as I live.'

'Eugene is a gentleman,' said Jerome Dawe, 'and a boy of honour. You, Sholto, are a savage, and you will go to the devil, as savages invariably do. For what you have said to me now you shall have another day here; after that'—this was said with some jocosity and sprightliness—'perhaps you will know how to behave?'

'I won't stay—I won't stay!' the boy shrieked; and he made a dash at Jerome Dawe, and wound about his leg, and tore at his coat like a savage indeed. Jerome Dawe turned pale, and seemed for a moment disposed to let the boy carry his point, when suddenly poor Sholto, making a false move, let go his uncle's leg. The uncle, with great celerity, whipped through the door, and locked it on the other side. Then, in reply to the volley of kicks which rattled on the panel, Jerome Dawe, having recovered his dignity and his courage, called out in a tremendous voice,

'There you stay, Master Sholto, on bread-and-water, until you tell me you are sorry. O, kick away, my boy!' he cried, becoming quite facetious after feeling his leg and finding that he was not really bitten or lacerated; 'when you kick through the door, I shall let you off the rest.'

The reply from within to this sarcasm was such a renewal of kicking, that it seemed as if Jerome Dawe's good faith would soon be put to the test; and he himself waited to see if the door was as strong as he thought. Presently the kicks relaxed in vigour somewhat, which Jerome Dawe noticing, with a humorous expression went proudly down-stairs with the air of a man who has tamed a lion.

At the foot of the first flight he met his housekeeper, an elderly wizen-faced woman, dressed in an absurd travesty of fashion and affectation of youth.

'What can the matter be?' she asked. Her preposterous air exactly suited her preposterous appearance.

'That boy again!' replied Jerome Dawe. 'He stole five shillings off my library table this morning.'

'That he did not,' the woman exclaimed, snatching at the opportunity of correcting her master. 'I have the money in my pocket. It was not safe to leave it about.'

'You took the five shillings, did you, Tabby?' asked Jerome Dawe, with the voice of a man who might scold.

'I did,' she retorted boldly. 'What right have you to leave money about in that way? You ought to know better!'

'Perhaps I ought,' Jerome Dawe replied, all the premonition of scolding vanishing. 'But what am I to do with Master Sholto?

I have shut him up for to-day and to-morrow.'

'Leave him shut up,' the woman answered insolently. 'He will want it for something else. Come down; your dinner is ready.'

'You are quite right, Tabby,' Jerome Dawe answered. 'He will want it for something else. Besides, it would never do to confess to the fellow that we had made a mistake. At the same time, Tabby, let him have some dinner.'

'Leave his dinner to me,' Tabby replied, in her impudent way. 'You go and eat your own.'

End of Introduction.

CHAPTER I.

A PICTURE OF AN OLD-FASHIONED GENTLEMAN — SHOWING WHAT STRANGE PEOPLE FOUNDED GOOD FAMILIES, AND WHAT ODD DESCENDANTS THEY BEGOT.

'To bed, Sholto, do you hear? To bed this minute!'

'Eugene, my boy, *you* may sit up if you choose.'

These sentences came not from two speakers, but from one. Because they were divided by a pause, and more sharply divided by a change of tone from snappish to caressing, I have written each by itself. But who was this speaker with two voices issuing such contrary commands?

He was none other than the Jerome Dawe who has already figured in our Introduction, but who has not yet been fully described. A tall elderly gentleman he was, of portly figure, which was well fashioned in spite of the large bones which framed it. Jerome Dawe had a grand-looking head, and his spacious forehead was the more suggestive of mental power because his hair was brushed upward and stood straight in air, disclosing two fine temples. His

shirt was frilled in the antique style; his massive seals hung from the now-forgotten fob; and his well-shaped legs were breeched to the knees, and thence clad in silk stockings. He was to the eye a gentleman of the old school. Possibly at that date three or four dozen like himself in the United Kingdom clung to the attire of the past; but he had become now such a palpable antiquity, such a visible anachronism, that people stared at him as he walked by, and wondered if he were come from a masquerade. His imposing step, his magnificent carriage, his dignified air, arrested any tendency to mirth; while his long ebony stick, with Shakespeare's head carved on the handle, suggested that it would in any case be prudent not to smile until he had fairly passed by.

He was not walking now, but sitting in his armchair, erect and imperative. His voice was strong and clear, and he had altogether a leonine appearance, which might be described as formidable, and the growl with which he ordered Sholto to bed carried out the leonine resemblance with great vivacity.

Of Mr. Jerome Dawe, my reader, I am sure you are anxious to hear something more. Accordingly I shall begin with his pedigree, which was of historical importance. By birth he was a gentleman, as indeed his attire, however fantastic, proclaimed. His descent was long and fully ascertained. Read in the light of plain fact, his first known ancestor was a person of good wind and muscle, not over-nice as to the distinction between mine and thine. This original Dawe fell in with a great political character and conqueror who was also renowned for his wind and muscle, and still more for the rapidity with which he deprived other people of

the use of theirs. This conqueror was no creature of fiction, but a man with a real name and address like you and me; and some people say he was a saint, and some people say he was a villain; but for my part—not having been in the conqueror's mind—I cannot tell which he was, nor does the question in the least concern us. What does concern us is that Dawe the First, who came from nowhere, made himself useful to the conqueror, and for so doing got a large slice of land which a fortnight or so before had been in the peaceful and undisputed possession of a third party. This third party happening to disagree with the conqueror on some little point of order, found himself all of a sudden swinging from a tree, with every alternative of behaviour over at once and for ever. Having in this gratifying way been installed in respectable landed society, the Dawes set about behaving themselves, and, after Falstaff, living cleanly as noblemen should. They became generals, and deans, and magistrates, and whatever beside was dignified. They wore scarlet, and gold, and fur, and lawn. They preached before kings. They sat on judicial benches and sent evil-doers to prison. And now there was such a perspective of Dawes in a long ancestral line, with collateral branches, that it was quite a procession. There were military Dawes, naval Dawes, judicial Dawes, canonical Dawes, decanal Dawes, even episcopal Dawes. There were Dawes who lay in Westminster Abbey. There were Dawes who had died bravely in defence of their country, watering foreign clay with good English blood. There were Dawes who had been gentlemen of England and lived at home at ease. There were Dawes who had been fruit-

ful and multiplied and replenished the Dawe. And in this brilliant crowd there could scarcely be seen skulking far behind the figure of the first Dawe of them all; which indeed was fortunate for the rest of the family. The less that was seen of that personage the better for all who bore his name.

By many generations of this respectability was our Jerome Dawe separated from his renowned original; and the grave and portentous elderly man who now inherited the name was in many ways what is called a gentleman. He had certain ideas which are peculiar to gentlemen, and he had been associated with gentlemen all his life.

This majestic and remarkable man sat now gazing at two small boys. One was our little Eugene, a slender delicate lad, with white cheeks, neat features, regular teeth, and remarkably fine hands; the other, that same Sholto whom we before saw in a condition of unmerited disgrace. Little Eugene stood near to Mr. Jerome Dawe, regarding him with the confidence of a favourite, while Sholto kept prudently on the opposite side of the table, casting an occasional misgiving glance at the stick Shakespeare, which lay dangerously close to the great man's right hand.

'To bed, Sholto,' Mr. Jerome Dawe repeated, with increased severity—'to bed this instant, sir!'

Whereupon Sholto made a dash out of the room, shutting the door as he went with a crash which shook the house to its foundations.

'Back, sir!' roared Jerome Dawe, turning purple with passion—'back here, sir, or I'll—I'll—'

What he would do he either left to the boy's imagination to supply, or found his own unable to invent; but his terrible voice followed the flying youth up-stairs, and brought

him back to the room half-trembling, yet not wholly able to keep his countenance, and so giving way to covert explosions of laughter, which little Eugene marked with evident wonder and fear.

'How dare you slam the door, sir!' roared Mr. Jerome Dawe.

'Please, sir—'

Sholto cast an eye at Shakespeare, and hesitated; then his face lit up with a joke.

'It wasn't me, uncle; it was the wind.'

At which impudent falsehood he hastily put his hand to his mouth, and tried to stifle a fresh eruption of mirth.

'I tell you what it is, Sholto,' the uncle said, raising Shakespeare in the air in a way which reduced the youth to instantaneous and unfeigned sobriety, 'that is what I shall do.'

He smote the air three times in a very suggestive way; but, satisfied for once with the threat, waved his left hand and said once more,

'To bed, sir—to bed this instant.'

At the word, Sholto bounded through the door and up-stairs with the rapidity of a hare and the noise of a war-horse. His feet were heard crashing two flights overhead before his uncle quite realised that he had left the room.

'That boy is incorrigible,' cried Mr. Jerome Dawe, now addressing little Eugene. 'Call him—he has left the door open now—call him back, Eugene. The fellow must be cured.'

'O, let me shut it,' cried little Eugene, anxious, it seemed, to save Sholto's bones, for Shakespeare was again working through the air in a most menacing fashion. 'He will only slam it again.'

And with an affected dancing sort of step he tripped across the room, and closed the door as gently and carefully as if he had been a lady sealing a love-letter. Then

he came over and seated himself daintily.

'Now, Eugene,' Jerome Dawe said, 'take down your fiddle, and you shall have a lesson.'

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH MRS. SALLY BADGER
INVADES THIS HISTORY.

'Elbow down, Eugene. Mind your bow arm. Fingers there—so. The thumb just a *little* more over. There! now you may begin.'

So little Eugene, with the fiddle tucked under his chin, and looking very deformed and uncomfortable, began slowly drawing the bow across the string, and 'Rousseau's Dream' dimly emerged from the concord of sound. Jerome Dawe watched him with great interest, holding an imaginary fiddle—his own priceless Cremona lying meanwhile on the floor—and moving an imaginary bow, as a model for the little pupil, who, trying to secure his violin with his chin, and casting his eyes upward to watch his preceptor, was an illustration of embarrassment not easily to be paralleled. To add to the poor boy's perplexity, while he was so engaged the door reopened softly without attracting Jerome Dawe's attention, and there, on the mat outside, stood Sholto, reproducing each of his uncle's motions with the most laughable fidelity, while by a significant twist of his nose he symbolised the noise which he dared not make. The three stood in this way: little Eugene fiddling; Jerome Dawe fingering the air, and drawing his bow with the utmost elegance; and Sholto, on the mat, gesticulating and grimacing with a violence which made the absolute noiselessness of his proceedings more comical than

anything else he did. At last poor little Eugene, who long had struggled with his feelings, could hold out no longer. He broke into a fit of laughter.

‘What is the matter, Eugene?’ Jerome Dawe asked, ‘his eyes twinkling, however, for he liked to see his favourite enjoy himself. ‘There is nothing to laugh at, that I can see.’

‘The fiddle tickled me,’ replied the boy; and, with a despairing glance at Sholto for mercy, he shoved the instrument under his chin again, and recommenced his playing.

Jerome Dawe, with great gravity and interest, postured himself anew, and once more, with his Barmecide fiddle and bow, modelled himself before his tortured nephew’s sight. And Sholto, on the mat, turned his uncle’s every posture into some monkey antic, until poor Eugene was on the verge of another outbreak. But relief came unexpectedly. Sholto vanished all at once, and, for a moment, inexplicably. The appearance of Tabitha Spring, however, explained his flight; and that estimable woman walked into the room with her nose high in air, emblematic of scorn, and a backward glance of her eyes which betokened fear.

‘Mr. and Mrs. Badger,’ she announced; and with a prudent depression of her nose before the visitors could observe that feature, she took herself off.

The visitors entered in the following way: Mrs. Badger, a tall woman, with a hooked nose and heavy eyebrows, advanced with a military step and a general air of command. She exhibited that kind of manner which we observe in pictures of battles, where a commander with lifted sabre leads his men into the heart of the conflict. Upon her ensued Mr.

Badger—a man as small as his wife was tall—plump, easy-going, with a meek and sleek face. He sidled, rather than walked, into the room; his hands hung beside him with a limpness which told of feebleness of soul; he said, ‘How do you do, Jerome?’ in a conciliating voice; and he sat down upon the edge of a chair with an apologetic air, as if he might be expected to have chosen the floor. After him came a boy of ten or twelve—a boy with a spacious and round face—flat, like a cheese, but with immense colour in it. Mrs. Badger having emitted a salutation like the crack of a pistol, seated herself with a sharp, decisive action, sudden, angular, and alarming.

‘This is a warm evening, Jerome,’ Mr. Badger remarked, in a soft and affable tone, quite a pipe of peace.

‘Yes, Samuel—yes,’ Jerome Dawe replied, assenting to the statement, but with stateliness, ‘it is a warm evening—very warm.’

‘It is nothing of the kind!’ said Mrs. Badger, dashing into conversation in a gladiatorial manner which made Jerome Dawe jump; but Samuel Badger smiled in unruffled placidity.

‘I consider,’ Mrs. Badger said, looking round to see the effect of her behaviour—‘I consider the evening sweetly mild. I do wish,’ continued Mrs. Badger, looking straight at Jerome Dawe—‘I do wish people would find something to talk about beside the weather.’

Jerome Dawe shifted in his chair and looked still very uneasy. Mr. Badger sat with the same fat smile upon his face. If a fly had hummed past his ear, he might have showed more uneasiness.

‘Jerome,’ the lady said, after this pause. She ejected the two syllables in her militant way, and made the great man jump again.

'Yes, Sally.'

'What time does that boy go to bed?'

'Well, Sally,' Jerome Dawe replied, in the hesitating and ambiguous manner which he greatly affected, 'you see I can scarcely say that I have any fixed rule.'

'You ought to have a fixed rule,' was the retort. 'Send him to bed now.'

'Eugene,' Jerome Dawe said, with as imperial an air as he could assume under the circumstances, 'go to bed, my boy.'

Whereupon little Eugene, setting his fiddle carefully on the floor, and going round the room with much address, said good-night to everybody, including Master Badger. Mrs. Sally Badger regarded his outstretched hand with uncertainty for a moment, but took it at last, and used it like the handle of a pump. Little Eugene then walked out with an elegant air, closing the door gently as he went.

'A very well-behaved lad,' Jerome Dawe remarked, noting the little fellow's behaviour with gratification—'an uncommonly well-behaved boy.'

'That is your opinion, Jerome,' the lady said.

And simultaneously her conciliating husband ventured to say,

'I quite think with you, Jerome.'

Upon which his lady, wheeling upon him with great asperity, called out, 'Samuel, please wait till you are spoken to!'

Her whole behaviour produced a visible effect upon Jerome Dawe. By this time he showed scarcely a trace of his habitual pomp and dignity, and could hardly be identified with the terrible rebuker who had so lately threatened his nephew. And Mrs. Sally Badger, who through all her aggressions of manner and speech kept her

eyes keenly set on Jerome Dawe, marking every change of his features, said here in the same minatory style,

'Now that the boy is gone, Jerome, I have something to say to you.'

CHAPTER III.

SHOWS BY EXPERIMENT THAT A FIDDLE CAN SOMETIMES MAKE AS MUCH NOISE AS A DRUM.

'SALLY,' said Jerome, with deepening uneasiness, 'I am always delighted to hear anything you have to say.'

'She speaks so to the point, you see,' Mr. Badger interjected.

'Samuel,' his wife said more determined than ever, 'will you wait till you are spoken to?'

'I was only making a little preface to your remarks, my dear,' poor Samuel rejoined, trying to cover his humiliation with a witicism.

'Thank you,' retorted his wife. 'I can make my own prefaces.' At which word she fixed her gaze on Jerome Dawe with significance, and saw that he shifted in his chair a third time.

'You are appointed guardian to the little Walsinghams?'

The question was inflected interrogatively, so Jerome Dawe answered,

'I am.'

'Of course you will have to place them under the care of some experienced person who will bring them up?'

'So it appears,' he replied again.

'Jerome,' the lady said, 'I will take charge of those children.'

This might appear to be an offer, but the tone in which it was delivered showed that it was an announcement.

'Sally,' Jerome Dawe replied, turning quite red with confusion, 'I must consider that matter.'

'Nothing of the kind,' she answered, with astonishing decision. 'We are poor. The money allowance will be of great importance to us; and being your relatives, nothing is more likely than that we should undertake the care of your wards.'

'That is quite true,' the unhappy Jerome Dawe said, 'but—'

'But!' the lady cried, catching him up. 'Shall I tell you, Jerome, what is on the other side of that "but"? You have promised the care of the children to your dear friends the Ruddocks!'

'O, no, Sally,' he answered, speaking for the first time with some sign of courage, 'I have not promised.'

'Something very like it, then,' she retorted scornfully. She was not going to split straws with him. 'No matter: the children shall not go to the Ruddocks.'

'You think not, Sally?' said he submissively.

'If she says "not,"' Samuel remarked, with the air of a man of experience, "'not" it will be.'

'Samuel,' his wife cried angrily, 'hold your tongue! I was going to say, Jerome, that Ruddock and his wife think themselves very clever. I see through their plan. These girls are to be brought up in their house. In due time one girl is to marry Eugene.'

'Now really, Sally, with your good sense, to talk of marriage, when the boy is twelve and the girl not ten!'

'It is not *my* good sense that is concerned,' Mrs. Badger replied sarcastically. 'However, I came here to-night to tell you that it will not do. People would talk. It would make a scandal. Besides, we want the money allowance, Jerome,' she said, looking him full in the face. 'You promise the care of those children to me before I leave this room!'

It was a curious study. Jerome Dawe was masculine, wealthy, pompous, and with a reputation for moral as well as physical courage. Mrs. Badger was only his niece; she was poor; she had lowered herself by her marriage. All the odds in a struggle of this kind were against her; and yet so well did she know her relative, and so daringly had she reduced him to an extremity of fear, that she was altogether his mistress. It was most awkward for Jerome Dawe. He knew that he had virtually, if not literally, promised the care of the children to the Ruddocks. The interest of the Ruddocks he had really at heart. And even now one syllable delivered with proper emphasis would set him free of this oppressive Sally Badger. But Jerome could not frame that syllable, and Mrs. Badger knew he could not, and she kept her gaze set upon him with unrelaxing severity.

'You promise, Jerome?'

'Yes—I promise.'

'Samuel and myself are to have charge of those children until they come of age?'

'You are to have charge of those children until they come of age.'

Jerome Dawe attempted to say this with something of the air of a free agent. Even in his extreme subjection he clung to the fiction of independence.

'You hear, Samuel?' the lady said, registering a witness of the contract on the spot.

'O yes, I hear,' her husband answered. 'You see, my dear, Jerome has a particularly clear voice. I have repeatedly noticed Jerome's particularly clear voice.'

'I have to call on the Ruddocks in the morning,' the managing woman continued, reading her relative's thoughts. 'I shall tell them of this arrangement.'

'You will!' exclaimed Jerome Dawe, expressing his relief at this offer, before he saw how humiliating it was to himself. 'That will be kind, Sally.'

'They will be angry,' the lady said. 'I like to see such people angry. They will storm: so they may. If they do not storm, and pretend to be satisfied, they will dislike this upset all the more. It is not the first time I have made these people feel, and it shall not be the last. However, Jerome, I will say you have acted most handsomely.'

Before Jerome Dawe could taste the flavour of a compliment for which he must pay so dearly, a singular and alarming noise outside attracted their attention, and immediately the door was thrown open, and Sholto was seen on the threshold desperately engaged with a cock and a hen. He had been trying to put the fowls into harness for the purpose of driving them in triumph round the parlour, and the birds objecting to the preliminary arrangements a disturbance arose. The upshot was that the door flew open, and the cock and hen broke loose, and dashed wildly into the room with a most maddening flutter and clatter. All was confusion in an instant. Mrs. Badger jumped on a chair, and began to gesticulate as if she were delivering a public oration; her husband tried to secure the hen; Sholto tore wildly after the fugitive cock; and Jerome Dawe caught up 'Shakespeare' and made after his nephew. The results were dreadful. 'Shakespeare' was used with terrific effect; Sholto yelled; the cock and hen clattered and zig-zagged in all directions; and finally, as Jerome Dawe was pursuing his nephew round the table, the boy stumbled and fell right upon the Cremona, which with a ter-

rific crash ceased as a musical instrument to be. This was like a stroke of enchantment. The whole company stood still; the very cock and hen stopped in their wild career, and seemed afraid even to wink; Jerome Dawe stood petrified, and 'Shakespeare' fell from his hand; and poor Sholto, who had turned as pale as death, after a second's irresolution, bolted from the room.

Mr. Badger was the first to speak. He took up the shattered violin, which was smashed like a handbox and hopelessly ruined. After regarding the crushed carcass in silence for a full minute, Mr. Badger said in his pacific way,

'Do you know, I don't really think—I don't really think'—he said this for the second time with the most milky mildness—'that this instrument will ever be of any great use again.'

CHAPTER IV.

TWO VERY YOUNG GENTLEMEN, SITTING ON THE END OF A BED, DISCUSS A VERY ANCIENT QUESTION.

It was late that night, and poor Sholto had received such discipline as effectually prevented sleep from closing his eyelids. He had crept into little Eugene's room for sympathy, and Eugene had inspected with great commiseration certain weals which his friend bore as remembrancers of the evening's frolic. The fact was, Jerome Dawe had tried to make the boy cry, which Sholto, being a stout-hearted little fellow, would not do. He bore his castigation patiently enough, knowing he deserved it; but not a groan could his uncle flog out of him. Now, Jerome was hot-tempered, and moreover very valiant, and he went on flogging until the

thought struck him that it might be awkward if he had to explain his proceedings at length before a coroner. This no sooner occurred to his mind than with great expedition he hurried his nephew off to bed. Sholto's punishment had indeed been cruelly severe, and was the less to be justified as it had turned out that the crushed violin was not the Cremona after all, but only that on which Eugene was learning his notes, which was worth no more than a few shillings.

However, by this time Sholto had recovered from the severer pains, and little Eugene had expressed all the sympathy he could; and now the two small boys were sitting perched on the bed in their night attire, with their hands clasped round their knees, looking like the pictures of penguins in the natural history books.

'Are you fond of girls, Eugene?' asked Sholto, when some previous subject of conversation was exhausted.

'Girls!' exclaimed Eugene. 'Fond of girls! No, I hate girls.'

'I don't,' replied Sholto thoughtfully. 'Not altogether. I think they are rather nice.'

'O, I hate them,' little Eugene said emphatically.

'There is rather a nice girl at the haberdasher's shop on the hill,' Sholto continued. 'I think she is the daughter of the shopman, and I know her name is Ellen. She has got very nice eyes; I don't exactly know the colour, but they look capital. I don't know that she cares for me, but I go and buy things of her; only last time she charged me sixpence for a threepenny bottle of scent. I don't think that was fair; do you, Eugene?'

'Certainly not,' Eugene replied energetically. 'Catch me buying scent of any girl!'

'However,' said Sholto, 'I did not say anything, because I did not want her to think me mean. I am not quite sure that I would like to marry her after that.'

'What are you going to be, Sholto?' Eugene asked. The question was suggested by Sholto's mention of matrimonial engagements.

'An officer,' Sholto replied. 'I want to be in battles and that sort of thing. I should like to be at the head of my men, you know, leading them on to victory.'

'I should not care for that,' little Eugene remarked, shaking his head; 'besides, Sholto, have you money enough to be an officer?'

'What does an officer want with money?' Sholto demanded.

'O, I don't know,' practical little Eugene replied. 'I hear papa and mamma talk about it sometimes, and they say an officer wants all sorts of things, and has to spend a lot.'

'Now, what can an officer want?' Sholto argued. 'Let us see. He wants his sword—and his bed—and he might have a war trumpet, you know—and a chair—and a table.'

'But suppose you married Ellen?' suggested Eugene.

'Then,' Sholto answered gravely, 'we should want another chair.'

This reply seemed so fit and final that little Eugene did not venture to question it, and for a moment the conversation flagged, until Sholto took it up again.

'It is no use, Eugene, your talking about hating girls, because you have got to marry. I heard uncle talking with your father, and they were saying that some girl they were speaking about would make a capital wife for you. They called her Mildred, and they said she would be very rich.'

'I should like her to be rich,' remarked Eugene.

'I should not mind,' Sholto said. 'What has a soldier to do with money? His wife must be ready to go with him, you know; and when they are on campaigns they cannot spend much, even if they try, because there are no shops, you see.'

'But you would not be on campaigns all the time,' Eugene replied, having evidently a more accurate foresight of life than his elder.

'Then,' retorted Sholto, 'the rest of our time we should live in barracks.'

Sholto, little Eugene said, after a pause. He did not seem to have noticed the last remark.

'Yes, Eugene.'

'Did they say that girl is very rich?'

'O, immensely rich, I heard my uncle say. She has a sister called Violet, and my uncle said, "*Poor Violet, none of the money will come to her; all will go to Mildred.*" Do you know, Eugene, I felt very sorry for Violet. I wonder what she has done that she is to have no money? I took a dislike to Mildred when I heard it, and I wanted to help Violet.'

'Perhaps Mildred had nothing to say to it,' Eugene suggested. 'I do not see that she is to be blamed, and I do not see what we have to say to helping Violet.'

'Anyhow, Mildred ought to give up half to Violet,' Sholto said.

'Perhaps she will give hersome,' Eugene answered.

Upon this followed a long pause.

'Sholto,' Eugene called out.

'Yes, Eugene.'

'I like Mildred.'

'And I like Violet.'

'I am getting tired, Sholto.'

'So am I. Good-night.'

'Good-night.'

And that very night, while these two little boys lay sleeping, a steam-packet was ploughing its way across the water from France to England. The sea was smooth, except where the prow of the swift ship parted it into white dividing waves, which fell back in great rolls of spray that glistened like snow in the full moonlight. The sky was like the water, clear and still. In a little berth of the ladies' cabin, the two small girls, Mildred and Violet, were lying side by side, Violet sleeping, and Mildred wide awake. The little creature sometimes watched the slumbering figures round her; sometimes wondered what the occasional footsteps on the deck meant—was it the captain taking care of them all? sometimes she tried, by the dim lamplight, to decipher the carved woodwork on the other side of the cabin; sometimes she shrank back half in wonder, half in fear, to see through the little round window the white foam go dashing by. Then she looked at Violet sleeping peacefully. Frail and sad was that white face with its long eyelashes and its mass of dark hair. Mildred noticed that her sister's shoulder was uncovered, and softly drew the blanket over it to keep her from the cold. Then she thought of the wide lonely sea, the land they were going back to, the darkness of the night, the strange people that would soon be taking care of them both, and her eyes filled up. She hid her face in the quilt to stifle her crying, lest Violet should hear; and she sobbed out the sorrow of her lonely heart, 'O mamma, mamma!'

(To be continued.)

MARK LEMON.

(With a Portrait.)

TENDER memories of Mark Lemon cling about the history of *London Society*. When this magazine stood alone, as a popular miscellany of admirably-illustrated light literature, Mark Lemon was among its leading contributors. During many years he wrote for it an annual story. When he died his usual December pages were filled by an article entitled 'Our Christmas Contributor.' The *in memoriam* tribute was from my pen. In later days I told 'The True Story of *Punch*' in these columns. Christmas is here again, and the Editor, moved by the solemnly-festive season, looks back as the rest of us do. I can imagine him counting up those quite genial stories from the pen of Mark Lemon which were wont to adorn his extra number. Mark Lemon was the friendly model of more than one artist for pictures of 'Father Christmas' himself. Poor Eltze drew him in that character in one of the last black-and-white studies that he ever made upon the wood. It was engraved by Swain for the *Illustrated Midland News*. 'Father Christmas' was shown at a game of romps with a bevy of boys and girls. The pleasant editor of *Punch* loved little children. Mr. Eltze made a typical picture of Mark Lemon, as well as a characteristic representation of the spirit of the time, when he depicted his large figure and genial face as the centre of a happy domestic circle. In *London Society* first appeared the popular series of papers, with many illustrations

from rare old prints, entitled, 'Up and Down the London Streets.' These were afterwards republished in a volume, which is now very scarce.

Resolving to present to his readers a new portrait of an old friend, Mr. Hogg lays his finger upon another name not unfamiliar to the readers of *London Society* years ago, and asks me to write the accompanying text. What is there left to be said of the man who was not a scholar in the academic sense, but who was wise beyond scholarship? A ballad-maker, a playwright, a novelist, he did not astonish the world, but he left it none the worse for any line he ever wrote. His 'Old Time and I' and 'When we were Boys Together' are songs that live. His *Hearts are Trumps* and *Grandfather Whitehead* are plays that hold the stage. *Wait for the End* and *Loved at Last* are among the best novels of the genial matter-of-fact school of his day. His *Enchanted Doll* and *The Legends of Number Nip* have excited the wonder and admiration of thousands of children. When men think of the author of *Pickwick* as an actor, they also remember his companion and friend Mark Lemon.

I was at Chatsworth recently, and, among other matters associated with the hospitalities of the ducal mansion, I found myself recalling the happy days Mark Lemon and some of his friends spent there. The late duke evidently delighted in the society of

literary men. Sir Joseph Paxton, who had risen from head-gardener to intimate friend, was one of the few outsiders who had a seat at the *Punch* dinners. Living in a miniature palace of his own, within the gates of Chatsworth Park, he was on familiar terms with both parties, and helped to 'make things pleasant' all round. It was *Punch*, you know, that named Mr. Paxton's building 'the Crystal Palace.' Sundry of the members of Mark Lemon's staff were frequent visitors to Chatsworth, and they are remembered to this day by the people of the neighbourhood. It will possibly be in his character as the father of *Punch* that Mark Lemon will go down to posterity in the contemporary history of his time. He will also be chronicled in the records of the stage as one of the men who played Falstaff without padding.

There are various opinions as to the merits of his representation of this character. I venture to say that the critics who only saw his performances in London did not see him at his best. Mark Lemon was a bashful man. He was very sensitive to criticism, and he was never quite able to fling off a certain self-restraint which characterised his acting in London. Add to this the novelty of the work, his want of practice, the anxieties attending his other labours, and some heavy pecuniary losses in which he was involved at the time, and it must be confessed that he was handicapped. It was not until his appearance in Scotland that he can be said to have done justice to himself in Falstaff. He always expressed great pleasure at the reception he received in the north. 'My Scotch tour,' he said, 'was one of the happiest experiences of my life.' There was something very

quaint and interesting in the dressing of the stage in this representation of the story of the fat knight; and there was a realism in the actor's business which gave one the idea of the full artistic use of a physical fitness for the part. On the other hand, I think I have seen better impersonations of the character by men who had to pad for it than by those who had not. Mark Lemon's scenes with the page were admirable in their mock heroics. The severe moralist regards the downfall of Falstaff as an impressive retributive picture of well-deserved punishment. But Mark Lemon, as the curtain fell, left his audience full of that keen regret which the essayist felt who imagined Falstaff's failings were assumed for the amusement of himself and others. Of course this is not the right view; but sympathy with the humour of the part might well inspire it, and this no doubt induced Mark Lemon to play Falstaff, 'the man in buckram scene,' as if he really did know that the Prince was drawing him out.

'I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men,' was often applied to Mark Lemon as the editor of *Punch* in the personal press notices that appeared in connection with his acting tour. The compliment was well deserved. A model editor, he not only inspired his staff with clever ideas, but he was generous in his appreciation of their best hits. Says Cumberland of Shakespeare's Falstaff, 'He conducts himself with equal moderation towards others; his wit lightens, but does not burn; and he is not more inoffensive when the joker than when joked upon. Temper and good-humour were necessary to his position.' One may aptly use this same language to describe Mark Lemon and his

staff. The late Mr. Hain Friswell, in a book on *Modern Men of Letters*, said, by way of apology for not quoting any of his writings, 'Therefore, O reader! remembering the sweet and gentle nature of the man, take down any volume of *Punch*, and selecting, not the long articles, but the admirably fitted padding (for the last thirty years), pick out the sweetest, neatest, and the most pointed paragraphs and epigrams, and put them down with a clear conscience to its editor, Mark Lemon.' If this suggests too broad a margin of activity for the editorial pen, there are, nevertheless, many numbers of *Punch*, some twenty years ago, of which it might be said with perfect truth. For more than a quarter of a century he swayed the fortunes of the most influential of the world's 'comic papers,' and his policy never wavered from that high moral tone of wholesome fun and earnest satire which laid the foundation of *Punch*, and upon which his successors have builded.

It has been well said that a man of letters or science, whose name may be popular not only in his own country, but conspicuous even in other lands, is often hardly known in the immediate neighbourhood where he lives. 'His ordinary acquaintance, who see him in his every-day habits, imagine there can be nothing very wonderful about a person who, in manners and appearance, differs so little from the rest of his species.'

Agricola may be mentioned as a very ancient case in point. In modern times Crabbe may be quoted. He was surprised when he came up to London to find that he was well known. 'In my own village,' he said, 'they think nothing of me.'

Mark Lemon was an exception to what appears to be almost 'the rule.' But he did differ somewhat in appearance from the rest of his species. He was known and beloved by the villagers of Crawley. They were as proud of having the editor of *Punch* a resident among them as the students, on the 'grand day' of the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, were to welcome his latest successor, Mr. F. C. Burnand, among the distinguished guests present in their historic hall.

Mark Lemon was born in London, November 30, 1811, in a house which stood on part of the site of the Crystal Palace Bazaar in Oxford-street. At five years of age he was sent to live with his grandfather, who was a farmer. He was educated by the Rev. James Wilding. At an early age he left school, and began to write for the newspapers. His father dying, his mother married a second time, and, through his father-in-law, the young fellow became associated with Verrey's Brewery in Kentish Town, an undertaking of which, for a short time, he became the manager. Later in life, owing to a family disagreement, the Verrey influence led to his investing in the lease of a tavern in Wych-street. He was advised that a rapid fortune would compensate him for the disagreeable character of the business. In three months, however, he gave it up, and devoted himself wholly to literature. It was a stony path, the new one which he had chosen (and which he had long desired to tread), but it had its pleasures and its privileges. His first successes were in writings for the stage. Mr. Benjamin Webster produced his first play, and Mrs. Stirling, I believe, appeared in it. His life was a busy one, but not eventful in respect of materials for an exciting bio-

graphy. The story of *Punch* may be said to be his history. A kindly, warm-hearted, genial man, of varied and excellent parts, he was a good husband, an indulgent father, and a devoted friend. Since I first knew him, a brilliant company of men with whom he was on close terms of personal

intercourse have, with himself, 'joined the majority.' If a man is known by the society he keeps, Mark Lemon's epitaph might have been confined to the record that he was the friend and fellow-worker of Thackeray, Dickens, Jerrold, Hood, Leech, Brooks, and Taylor.

JOSEPH HATTON.

'FAIS LE DROIT—ADVIENNNE QUE POURRA !'

We were six friends, a joyous band, sworn to face the world together,
Linked to strive or die for right—for fair or stormy weather.

And on our banner this we bore,

Only this—no need for more—

'Fais le droit—adviennne que pourra !'

One sleeps in the shade of the cross we planted in heathen land ;
We stood on the cliff when his ship sailed by, and as he waved his
hand,

Came floating faintly through the air

The words our brother was saying there,

'Fais le droit—adviennne que pourra.'

Two fought the battle of life together, in the city's crowded lanes,
In fever's noisome courts they fell, wrestling with Death for his gains ;

Together we watched them pass away,

Softly, some still voice seemed to say,

'Fais le droit—adviennne que pourra !'

One kept guard on a sinking wreck, a lad at his side, while the crew
Pulled off in the boats. They shouted 'Come one ! there is not room
for two !'

He bade the lad go, leave him there ;

They heard him mutter one short prayer—

'Fais le droit—adviennne que pourra !'

The younger one, whose dear bright life scarce ever a care had known,
Died fighting for honour, yet not by the sword ; fainting, sun-smitten,
alone,

He died as he lived, uncomplaining and brave ;

The Indian sun whitens the words on his grave,

'Fais le droit—adviennne que pourra !'

Alone I am left a gray-haired man—last of that joyous band,

Yet are we together, if only I true to our watchword stand ;

And surely the tie a moment riven

On earth, shall again be knit in heaven !

'Fais le droit—adviennne que pourra !'

THE BATTLES OF THE COLUMBINES.

ROWLAND HILL's once-famous chapel, which was in process of erection while the Surrey Theatre was being built, so greatly to the annoyance of that eccentric preacher, no longer exists. It has been converted into a shop and warehouse, but the theatre still flourishes. Even in its building it was the more fortunate, for Rowland Hill, comparing the two buildings to ships, said, in one of his sermons,

'The object of both these crafts is to reach the spicy port as soon as possible; but the devil's ship, if not a better vessel, is more actively manned; for, to do Satan justice, he is always industrious. Let it only land, and the whole shore will become tainted, and you will be poisoned on the very pastures which ought to be yours.'

For a time, however, the chapel had the best of it, being immensely attractive, while the theatre passed through a series of disasters and failures. It opened as a place for equestrian performances and a school for the stage, in which only children were to be the players; but, having no license for genuine theatrical entertainments, the Surrey magistrates shut it up. When reopened, with a license for musical dramas, and successful, the shareholders began to quarrel, and litigation brought it to grief. In 1789, John Palmer, being then a prisoner for debt within the Rules of the King's Bench, was just beginning to prosper in it, when he was seized and clapped into the Surrey Gaol as a rogue and vagabond. In

1794, after the playhouse had been closed for two years or more, Mr. J. Jones, and his son-in-law, a popular dramatic author and actor, raised its fortunes; and in 1805, when it was insured for only three thousand pounds, fire destroyed it. It was rebuilt and reopened in 1806, with so little success that, three years after, it was advertised for sale. Then began the triumphant reign of the stage monarch, Robert William Elliston, who altered, improved, and rechristened it 'The Royal Surrey Theatre,' for it had been previously known as 'The Royal Circus.'

In the year 1810 its circus or ride had been covered in with rows of seats, its stables converted into saloons, and where the managers had been refreshments were served, 'choice fruit and lemonade.' The ceiling had been gorgeously painted, the proscenium redecorated and gilded, and spectacular melodrama, ballet, and pantomime were the weapons with which the eccentric, boldly enterprising manager of that day challenged fortune south of the Thames. *Macbeth*, to avoid offending the powers above, was played to music, and so was *The Beaux' Stratagem*, in which Miss Sally Booth made her first appearance before the southern playgoers;* and for the pantomime—alas and alack the day!—Elliston engaged two columbines, 'that sparkling brunette of foreign as-

* The license then obtained did not permit the introduction of dialogue on the stage of any but the patent theatres without the continuous accompaniment of music.

pect and tender years,' Miss Giroux, and a Miss Taylor, whose personal charms were of no inferior description. The 'tender years' of Miss Giroux appear to be somewhat problematical; for the late Walter Donaldson, when he saw her dance in 1826, described her as aged and stout; and when she appeared under Elliston's management she was already a great favourite south of London, and not unknown in the provinces.

St. George's Fields, where the Surrey Theatre stood, was then a semi-rustic locality, and a large proportion of its inhabitants were debtors let out of the King's Bench Prison on bail, but compelled to reside entirely within the Rules, a triangular district of the borough of Southwark, extending along the Thames between the bridges, London and Blackfriars, to a point opposite the Elephant and Castle, where a toll-gate then stood. The square in the Blackfriars-road, called Nelson-square, was originally built entirely for their accommodation, and was full of highly fashionable debtors, who frequently visited the Surrey Theatre, carefully disguised, to escape recognition by sheriffs' officers, who used to keep watch for them at the doors—theatres being legally outside the Rules—and, by threats of re-arrestment, levy black-mail to a very considerable extent. The gallery visitors came largely from one of the most ill-favoured, unwholesome, densely-populated, and murderous districts in the metropolis—the murderous melancholy Mint; and the numerous old inns and taverns of Southwark sent to the pit and boxes a nightly contingent of country visitors. The river-side people, at no times the most peaceable and quiet members of the com-

munity, also patronised the old Circus, *alias* the new Surrey, and it used to be a favourite house amongst the sailors. Actors and actresses abounded on this side of the water to such an extent that St. George's Circus, at the south end of the Blackfriars—then the Great Surrey—road, was nicknamed 'Theatrical Buildings,' and in other places close by house after house was, from floor to basement, full of theatrical lodgers.

Out of these elements in front of the house, and the strong rivalry of Miss Giroux and Miss Taylor behind the scenes, arose some of the most remarkable theatrical riots ever witnessed; riots equalled only by those of the memorable O.P. at Covent Garden Theatre.

Night after night the disturbances prevailed, extending beyond the walls of the theatre, and filling the whole neighbourhood with discord, raging with special violence in Nelson-square and Melina-place, converting the numerous taps, spirit-shops, and tea-garden 'pubs' into the respective headquarters of fierce hot partisans; covering the blank walls, hoardings, palings, and tree-trunks with placards, handbills, pasquinades, and songs, some headed with the letter 'G,' some with a gigantic 'T,' whence these noisy disturbances have been handed down in the records of the Surrey stage as the G. T. riots.

Crowds used to gather about the stage-door, cheering and hissing tumultuously as the Giroux or the Taylor drove up in their respective hackney coaches; and the whole affair was a tolerably faithful echo of those aristocratic, but not less rough or violent, opera-house riots amongst the people of rank and fashion who used to hiss and hoot, or cheer and clap, the Italian singer Cuzoni, or her rival Faustina.

'Giroux,' says George Raymond in his *Life of Elliston*—which, by the way, was illustrated by 'Phiz,' now dead, and by the late George Cruikshank—'Giroux,' said he, 'was perhaps more of the Sylphide than the Muse. Giroux might have been Apollo's chosen; Taylor the beloved of Oberon.'

On the night of Miss Taylor's first appearance as columbine in the place of Miss Giroux, the Girouites occupied the first rows of the pit and boxes in great force; and when Miss Taylor sprang lightly from the wings, forth broke a terrific storm of hisses, mingled with cries of 'Giroux! Giroux!' The Taylorites were taken by surprise; nothing of this kind had they expected; yet with voices, feet, and sticks they did their best to stem the flood of fierce disapprobation. But on the next night they mustered in stronger numbers, and their furious onslaught of hisses and howlings, knockings and stampings, whistling, shrieking, yelling against Giroux avenged fully their defeat of the night before. The strife grew in intensity; people leaped from the pit into the boxes. Elliston appeared, but could not make himself heard; and the curtain fell amidst a scene of demoniacal rage and confusion.

On the third night each party had its chosen leader—Thomas Barratt marshalling the Taylor forces, Michael Slater heading the adherents of Giroux. The former wore in their hats the terrible initial 'T,' the latter bore a glorious 'G'; the former marched in a body from the Painters' House of Call, and the latter from the Duke's Head.

The ballad-singers took up the quarrel, and a parody on a song of the day, called 'The Rival Queens,' often collected a pugna-

cious and roaring mob around the obelisk. Miss Giroux issued an address, which, being posted outside the theatre, collected other crowds. This precious protocol ran as follows:

'SURREY THEATRE.—Miss Giroux, deeply deploring the display of a spirit in this theatre which, however flattering, is by no means calculated to serve her who is the object of it, presumes publicly to declare that she, neither personally nor otherwise, encouraged any hostility to the professional pretensions of a young person called Taylor.

'Miss Giroux takes the liberty to request that the enlightened portion of the British public which does her the honour to approve her performances will add to so proud a distinction the favour of abstaining from all unseemly contests, nor

"Mix with hired slaves, braves, and common stabbers,"

but allow at once MIND to triumph over MATTER!

'N.B.—Miss Giroux is not aware that in this generous nation it is disreputable to be either a Jew or a foreigner; but attempts have been made to fix on her the stigma of both! Miss Giroux is by no means a Jew, and has the happiness, moreover, of being born an English young lady.'

Night after night these riots disgraced the playhouse and disturbed the peace of the shady neighbourhood, attracting the curious and disorderly from all parts, greatly to the benefit of the theatrical treasury, despite the damage done to the theatre's fittings. It was a time when Elliston's passions for drink, debauchery, and gaming were at their worst, and he troubled himself but little about the Surrey Theatre so long as it brought the golden

grist to his wasteful mill; but he was at last brought to his senses, for the riots had become a source of public danger, and his license was no longer safe.

He therefore advertised his intention of stopping these disgraceful scenes, and pompously announced, in due regal form, that on the following Tuesday he would himself 'give judgment in the case' from the boards of his own theatre. On that evening, when the house was filled, the great actor-manager, with a grave stateliness and dignity which were really comical, walked before the curtain. He was neither tall nor dignified in personal appearance, and his usually bright eyes and intelligent face were on this occasion dull and owlish, for he was far from sober. Reaching the centre of the stage, after a solemn pause, his fine voice, a little thickened by inebriety, was heard. He looked to the prompt side, and, with a characteristic gesture of haughty command, said, 'Bring me a chair!'

The audience, stilled into expectancy, and knowing how greatly Elliston prided himself upon his speech-making capacity, burst into a roar of laughter.

Unmoved but scornful, he sank into a property state-chair, which the prompter himself lugged on and placed for the great man; and thus enthroned, waited, in an attitude of placid dignity, for silence and attention.

Presently the last snigger was heard, and the managerial speech was spoken, but only to renew and increase the riot. Hissing and chaffing mingled with scornful laughter as Elliston retired. Missiles began to fly; the cracking of wood and the rattling of the chandelier, the shouts and howls and shrieks, the whistling, the singing, the volleys of threats and the

answering cries of defiance, were all heard again with wofully augmented effect.

And so it continued night after night, for there was now no help, no means of avoiding it. To discharge either or both the columbines might have resulted in something terrible; to allow both to remain in the company was to perpetuate the disorder. Elliston was at the height of his alarm and in the depths of his despair, when the strong arm of the law at last intervened, with its then common tardiness, and the manager's mock tribunal gave way to a real one.

How the affair terminated will be seen in the published result of a trial which took place in the following July, when the case was removed from Surrey to Westminster, and the Attorney-General applied for a rule, &c., against the leaders of the disturbance. The two columbines, in the hands of Sir Vicary Gibbs and Lord Ellenborough, must have been productive of no little amusement to the Court. The case was not concluded until the following May, when on the conviction of the parties the annexed document was published:

'SURREY THEATRE.—Whereas a criminal information has been filed in the Court of King's Bench against us the undersigned, Michael D. Slater, of the parish of Lambeth, and Thomas E. Barrett of the same parish, for the part taken by us in the riotous proceedings which occurred at the Surrey Theatre in the month of May and June last, under which we now stand convicted, and are liable to be called upon to receive judgment; and whereas Mr. Elliston, the proprietor of the said theatre, has declined to accept any payment from us towards compensating him for the heavy expense which he has incurred and

the serious losses he has suffered by such riotous proceedings, but has, at our entreaty, consented to abstain from bringing us up to receive the sentence of the court, on condition,

'First, that we should make a public acknowledgment of our sorrow for such offence, and, secondly, that we subscribe a sum of money to the fund for the relief of the distressed Portuguese, in the following proportions: that is, that I, Michael D. Slater, should so subscribe one hundred and five pounds; and I, Thomas E. Barrett, twenty-one pounds.'

Then follows the abject apology

in full, with the signatures of the apologisers, and those of the counsel for the prosecution and that of the defendant Slater, with the date, May 25th, 1811.

Thus the Portuguese, who had been plunged by war with France, then the national enemy, into a state of the greatest distress and suffering, in addition to the hundred thousand pounds voted to them by the British Parliament, and the large sums raised by subscription lists all over the kingdom, reaped also the sole gain that accrued to anybody from the fierce warfare of rival columbines in the Great Surrey-road.

A. H. WALL.

PICTURES FROM PRAGUE.

He who has not seen Prague must not talk of a fine situation. No one can look at her and wonder that her origin is lost in antiquity. The first tribe, the first chieftain, that set foot on the spot must have seen here a superb site for a settlement. Just here, where the Moldau sweeps by with a broad bend; and on the left bank slopes, backed by higher slopes, rise, as if inviting to fortification, posts of observation and defence; whilst on the right bank stretches an ample area of more level ground, room for the city to expand at will. Her existence requires no accounting for, though, of course, she has her old legend, professing to do so. Libussa, first Duchess of Bohemia, says the fable, an eighth-century Amazon, with a taste for learning in general and the art of divination in particular, was mysteriously instructed by the soothsayers to lay here the first stone of a city that should be famous. To this day the city is worthy of its site, this 'town of a hundred towers,' 'costliest jewel in the earth's crown of walls'—so Prague has been styled by admiring men. Every stone in her preaches history, say the Germans, yet nothing strikes the foreign traveller more forcibly here than the impression of present life, activity, and progress. Old, but not antiquated, she has clearly no intention of being left behind in the struggle for existence.

Founded in the eighth century, fortified in the thirteenth, she saw the troubles of life begin for her with the Hussite wars in 1414, and continue for centuries with

little intermission. She was besieged during the Thirty Years War, by the Swedes first, afterwards by the French and Bavarians; twice again since that time by the Prussians; not to mention the ghostly invasion she suffered in the legend commemorated by Longfellow's ballad, 'The Beleaguered City,' the story of how, once upon a time,

'A midnight host of spectres pale
Beleaguered the walls of Prague.'

Yet Prague, like the walnut-tree and its companions in the proverb, seems to flourish the better under rough treatment. There is not a touch of the 'picturesque ruin' about her. To put it poetically, in the words of Goethe, 'Here the past has the fullness of the present to excess, and bright-coloured memories come forward to meet you. . . . Prague is a centenarian, with the gait of a strong man in the prime of life.' To put it prosaically, in the language of the guide-books, 'Prague is twelve miles round, with a population of 200,000—equal to that of Leeds—and a brisk trade in cotton, hosiery, glass, saltpetre, and malt liquor.'

Who gave her her name is an open question. Whether 'Prague' be derived from the Slavonian for threshold, for fire, for fountain, or the Celtic for something else—some four or five different derivations are given!—the distinctive, proud-sounding, half-Oriental appellation suits her exactly. The Moldau divides her into two halves; and she divides herself, if the expression be permissible, into five quarters. Thus, on the river's right bank, lies the

Altstadt, so called to distinguish it from the Neustadt, which encloses it on its three land sides, like a shell. Over the way—the water-way—lies the division known as the Kleinseite, above which, on the bold slopes behind, towers the Hradschin, or stronghold, the seat of the Imperial Palace, and the cathedral. The fifth quarter of Prague is the 'Jews' quarter,' a distinct little kernel within the Altstadt.

These have been the houses and homes of a proud and turbulent people. Not content with wars abroad, the different districts must frequently fight with each other. The so-called Neustadt—founded more than five hundred years ago, by the way—was called into existence by an imperial decree, the population having outgrown the Altstadt; but for long the old and the new town refused to amalgamate, and had to be separated by a wall and a moat and several gates, one of which, the Pulverthurm, is still standing, a picturesque Gothic tower of the sixteenth century, which you may sketch from the windows of the Blue Star Hotel opposite. It has, however, undergone 'thorough restoration.' The streets of the Altstadt, to which it leads, are composed of high, strongly-built old houses, no symptom of decay or stagnation anywhere about. This is the mercantile quarter, and swarms with busy inhabitants. Half of them are not Germans, but Czechs—the Slavonic tribe is as distinct in its type as in its language. They are an industrious and contented-looking set, on the whole; a small strong race, not undersized or puny, but reminding one of Dartmoor ponies and other walking illustrations of the proverb, 'little and good.'

In this ancient capital of an ancient people, some may like to

dream themselves back in the past, and draw mournful comparisons between the Middle Ages of splendour and romance and the age of prose, the nineteenth century, in which our lot is cast. For our part, we found a walk through Prague, old and new, leave us with a sense of unspeakable gratitude that we did *not* live in the picturesque old times here recalled to mind. What sort of reminiscences and characteristic traditions have they left behind them in this representative city? 'Here is the Town-hall, where several councillors were thrown out of the windows to be massacred by the populace.' 'Here is another, in front of which twenty-seven Protestant nobles were put to death.' 'On yonder tower the heads of these Protestant nobles were exposed for ten years.' 'Here is the bridge where the Empress's confessor was thrown into the river, by the Emperor's order, for refusing to betray her secrets.' 'Here, in the Imperial Palace, is the council-chamber, out of whose windows other councillors were precipitated.' Personally we can contemplate, with a sense of relief, some of the newest buildings in the new town, where fortifications have been largely converted into parks, its convents into founding asylums, lunatic asylums, blind schools, hospitals, and other representative institutions of an era that inaugurated the reign of humanity.

In the Ring, the ancient market-place of the Altstadt, is the Teynkirche, the old church of the Hussites. Since the final overthrow of the Bohemian Protestants—that is, for two hundred and fifty years—it has been in the hands of the Catholic party. In one of its chapels stand the statues of SS. Cyril and Methodius,

the traditionary apostles of Bohemia. They were two brothers, who, in the ninth century, undertook the Christianising of the Slavonian provinces, beginning with Bulgaria, as unmanageable, apparently, then as now. Methodius was a painter, and received a commission from the Bulgarian king to paint some terrific picture, the sight of which should awe his lawless subjects into submission. Methodius painted a 'Last Judgment' so terrific as to awe the king into accepting the new faith preached by the artist, who, this triumph achieved, proceeded into Bohemia, where his mission proved equally successful.

The two sights that impressed us most strangely in Prague were the Karlsbrücke and the Jewish synagogue. Every pedestrian exploring the town makes instinctively for the first. The bridge in question is a worthy link between the two noble halves of Bohemia's capital. It has stood two sieges successfully, and looks quite prepared for a third. Very singular and striking is the effect of the thirty stone statues and groups with which it is adorned. As sculptures they may not bear examination; as a piece of decorative architecture the result is a success so decided as to defy criticism. The view hence of the Hradschin, on the commanding heights opposite, is magnificent; you would fain linger to contemplate it or to watch the rushing Moldau underneath and the boats passing up and down, or to recall the numerous legends that hang about the spot; but the traffic is unfavourable for reverie, the stream of vehicles and foot passengers thick and incessant. From time immemorial it has been customary here for pedestrians to keep to the right from whichever side they are crossing, thus pushing and confusion are prevented.

This is not the only practical hint offered by the local authorities of Prague. For instance, all the streets that run parallel to the Moldau have their names lettered in white on a blue ground, the names of those leading to or from the Moldau being distinguished by a red ground. An excellent arrangement; the only thing to be said against its usefulness is that, for natives, such information is superfluous, and strangers, as a rule, do not find out the device in time to profit by it. Crossing the bridge, we reach first the Kleinsseite, which contains some remarkable palaces, notably that of Wallenstein, standing, for the most part, as when erected by him, containing various mementoes of the famous general. There are other palaces which it is open to the traveller to visit who is attracted by their princely names and the warlike memories they stir up. Another and a better sort of interest attaches to a modest house in a remote corner of the Altstadt, a house where Mozart resided for some time. Here he wrote his *Don Juan*, which was composed for Prague expressly, and first performed there in 1787. At Kerschirz, in the neighbourhood, his room and the stone table at which he wrote are still shown at a villa where he was a constant visitor, a villa belonging to his friend Dussek—not the well-known composer of that name, though, like him, a Bohemian and a pianist. The nation is eminently musical. It is a popular saying in Bohemia that whenever a child is born it is offered its choice of a fiddle or a purse. If it seizes the fiddle, it signifies that the infant will grow up a musician; if the purse, a rogue! There is apparently no alternative in this land. But even in music, in original compo-

sition at least, Bohemia has made no great mark, no more than in the sister arts. The genius of the race seems to be rather for successful imitation, and to stop short of inventive power.

From the Kleinseite we ascend to the Hradschin; the shortest way is by a staircase of two hundred steps. The Hradschin was founded by the Amazon queen already mentioned. Her name, Libussa, signifies 'the darling.' This ideal darling of a thousand years ago had a summer-house on a rock on the opposite bank of the Moldau, whence she used to precipitate her favourites into the river when they began to bore her. Strong-minded and studious, she refused to wed, except with the wisest of mankind. She sent out in quest of this phoenix, who was found at last, according to the legend, at the plough. Premislaus, a peasant-proprietor of the period, was designated as the worthy one, and summoned forthwith to the throne, which he occupied with honour, and became the founder of a royal dynasty. His successors were not allowed to forget their humble origin. The symbols—peasant's coat, cap, staff, and wooden shoes—figured henceforth as royal insignia in the coronation ceremony. The custom of presenting Premislaus' oaken shoes on a golden dish to the king-elect was preserved here, it is said, for several centuries.

The cathedral is a fine fragment, in process of completion. It is dedicated to St. Vitus, whose arm was presented by the Emperor Otho to Duke Wenzel of Bohemia, who first founded a sacred edifice on the spot nine hundred years ago. The outside—what there is of it—dates from the fourteenth century, and is a good specimen of florid Gothic; the tower,

formerly 520 feet high, was destroyed by fire in 1541, and now measures but 323 feet. The superb site lends the exterior every advantage. Inside, the treasure of the place—not excepting the fine mausoleum of the Bohemian kings—is the memorial chapel of Wenzel—saint and duke in one. He was murdered by his brother, and an ancient iron ring affixed to the door is said to be the one to which he clung on the occasion. The chapel itself is of the fourteenth century, and has this peculiarity—that the walls are inlaid with precious stones, such as agate, jasper, malachite, chrysoprase, not cut into symmetrical shapes, nor fitted in mosaic-fashion, but in large irregular blocks, that look as if some giant had taken them into his hand, smitten them into the wall, and flattened them against its face. They form rough but effective frames to some curious frescoes of the early Bohemian school. In a corner of the chapel is the monument of St. Wenzel, in full armour, cast in bronze by Peter Vischer, the master-carver of Nürnberg—a perfect work of art of its kind, a speaking contrast to the modern shrine of St. Nepomuk that flaunts its brilliancy upon us in the choir, a piece of eighteenth-century bad taste, florid, pretentious, and chiefly remarkable for the quantity of silver—a ton and a half—expended in its composition.

The pride of the Hradschin, however, is neither the interesting cathedral nor yet the Imperial Palace adjoining, covering a quantity of ground, and containing 440 apartments, but the incomparable view afforded from this point of Prague and her environs; the belt of mountains in the distance, the mass of sloping roofs, the bristling domes and spires that clothe the slanting heights im-

mediately beneath you and the plain across the river—the winding Moldau between, with its numerous islands and bridges. The prospect is indescribable. Well may the inhabitants be proud of their city. The proverb ‘God made the country, man made the town,’ is true no doubt in Bohemia as elsewhere. Still, natives, coming hither from the desolate sparsely populated country, or from the adjacent mountain lands, frost-bound all the winter, must be inclined to pronounce the town the more godlike of the two; even the pilgrim from abroad will agree. In going out of your way to get to Prague (go out of your way you must, for Prague is *en route* for nowhere), you have not come to see fine churches and old pictures or marvellous monuments—or, if you have, you will be disappointed—you have come to see Prague; and the sight is well worth the pilgrimage.

One glimpse more and we have done. Descending from the Hradschin to the Moldau direct, a suspension bridge thrown across to the Altstadt brings us almost immediately into that part of it known as the Jews’ quarter, formerly shut in by six gates. Thirty years since, its boundaries were still carefully defined by wires drawn across the streets. Less than a century ago every Jew was compelled by law to wear a yellow badge on his arm. Joseph II. was the first to do away with this decree, as with another forbidding any of these children of Israel to go abroad on Sundays and holidays without a ticket, for which they had to pay, of course. If the word Jew has among us become a byword for extortion, it must be admitted they had as just cause for complaint on this score. In Maria Theresa’s time all the Jews were suddenly banished on some

pretext from Prague, and then allowed to return on payment of a high ransom. Although here, as elsewhere, they have suffered many things from princes and peoples calling themselves Christians, Prague has always been one of their favourite resorts. It is supposed to be the oldest Hebrew settlement in Europe, and tradition asserts the first colonists to have been fugitives from the siege of Jerusalem. However this may be, they became a numerous and important body, and at times were treated by the rulers of the land with comparative consideration. To-day they number some 13,000. No yellow badges, no gates or wires, are needed to tell you where you are as you enter Joseph-street—a veritable hive of Hebrews of the Hebrews. The numerous population swarming around you are of the most pronounced type; the shops are of the characteristic order; the houses, with few exceptions, slovenly and forbidding-looking. Still, there is not here that degree of squalor which makes a walk through the Ghetto at Rome a positive ordeal for delicate nerves. Strange countenances regard you as you pass; strange voices offer to show you the way to the synagogue for a trifle. You decline, and find your own way there, otherwise unmolested. This curious old red-brick building dates from the twelfth century, and is said to be the single Jewish temple in the Gothic style of architecture. It was presented to the Jews by an amiably disposed emperor. At the back is a fountain, where the Jewish girls, filling their buckets, swung at the end of long poles, look like pictures straight from the East. The synagogue, with its crumbling walls, has an air of such untold antiquity that, beholding it, one can well-

nigh credit the legend that some of its foundation-stones came from the destroyed Temple at Jerusalem. A still stranger spectacle is the old Hebrew cemetery which lies near. It was closed as a burying-place a hundred years ago, but remains a curiosity of unique interest. The space is crowded with gravestones, some of fabulous age, overshadowed by elder-bushes and covered with grass and weeds, and inscribed with Hebrew characters and symbols various, designating the tribe to which the deceased belonged. A bunch of grapes denotes a descendant of Jacob; a pitcher, the tribe of Levi; two hands, the family of Aaron. Such commonly adopted names as Rose, Lion, Bear, Dove, Flower, are expressed by representations of the objects themselves. The spot teems with curious memories of ancient Jewish life, habits, and traditions. Formerly it was the practice of the benevolent here to deposit their alms, secretly, upon the graves, so that the poor, who were ashamed to beg, might come by night and help themselves according to their needs. A custom that speaks of a trusting simple-minded community. No more impressive and suggestive relic of the past can be conceived, even by a poet's imagination, than this cemetery in ruins, walled round, out of sight and hearing of living men, a forsaken garden of the dead.

It was after dark when we returned to the synagogue to attend the service, to which strangers are freely admitted. Scarcely a ray of light penetrates the interior, whose walls are black with the smoke of a thousand generations of candles. This gloom has a dark story to tell. In the fourteenth century there was an outbreak of popular fury against the Jews, and the very walls of the

synagogue were stained with the blood of the victims. The Jewish authorities decreed that these marks should ever remain, in token of the sufferings of their race; and although attempts to remove them were made, it became a popular superstition that these all failed, and calamity overtook the workmen engaged. So much is evident that paint and whitewash have played no part here within mortal memory. A goodly array of taper ends, with brass reflectors on the wall behind, illuminated the little building and the assembling congregation, the visible part of which (the Jewish women are invisible where they sit behind a grating) was composed mainly of old men and little boys. The visitor will search in vain for the semblance of a Daniel Deronda or Mordecai among the throng, though Lapidoths and little Jacobs are there in plenty, and a Shylock looks at you out of every corner. Yet the Shylock of Prague is in all probability a fairly honest and kind-hearted tradesman; and as to the courtesy and obliging temper of the custodian of the synagogue, they are enough to disarm the prejudice of the sternest representative of the modern 'Hep, hep!' and make us blush for our own cathedral vergers.

To the enthusiastic tourist every new place visited is like a new acquaintance made. In days like these, whose tendency is to efface distinctions between places and peoples, and when men and their habitations are growing more and more uniform all the world over, a visit to Prague is like the discovery of some strongly original character, some new friend of an independent type, and it is with a peculiarly grateful feeling for novel impressions and fresh ideas derived that we bid her adieu.

WEALTHY PAUPERS.

At early morn, to stretch my legs,
I daily take a stroll,
That makes me ripe for ham and eggs,
For tea and buttered roll.
Whichever way I chance to roam—
Not often very far—
This pretty thought attends me home :
How rich poor people are !

Serene the sky, and fresh the air ;
Our cockney parks are gay ;
The birds are warbling everywhere
To greet the welcome day.
Through yonder east, one sea of light,
Careers Apollo's car.
Free *gratis* is the solemn sight—
How rich poor people are !

'Tis joy intense on summer nights
Beside the brook to rove,
Or taste the many calm delights
That fill the shady grove.
To view aloft, with rapture deep,
Yon placid evening star
Is quite sublime and very cheap—
How rich poor people are !

A winter day, not over drear,
Has beauties all its own.
On winter eves the sky is clear
Around fair Dian's throne.
Although the dull December brings
Bronchitis and catarrh,
Except for such unpleasant things
How rich poor people are !

Great fortunes ev'ry day are made,
That leave one poor again ;
The love of Nature cannot fade
While breath and sense remain.
'Tis far too precious, after all,
For Chance to make or mar.
While Nature waits their beck and call,
How rich poor people are !

HENRY S. LEIGH.

ELISHA DODGE'S CONFESSION.

'Ye see you thought you was so all-fired smart that you'd always git the better of the law; but I says to you, twenty year ago, "Lish, if you don't look out, you'll bring up in the States prison." 'Member, Lish? It was after you'd be'n after them Early Ripes of Deacon Blissom's. Ef you'd ha' only be'n content to take a few here an' there, why nobody wouldn't ha' missed 'em; but you was bound you'd have the hull lot, and you got into trouble there. Massy to me! how mother cried that time when you was found out! 'Member, Lish? Wall, it's a mercy she ain't lived to see you to come to this; it's a kind of a thing that sticks to a man wuss'n pitch-tar, hevin' bin in the States prison. Wall, when I hurd you was done fur, I kinder thought I'd hev to come and see ye afore you was sent off. Wife, she wouldn't hear to it. "Wall, Hezekiah Dodge," says she, "I'm right down ashamed of you. It's bad enuff to hev a convict fur a brother 'thout runnin' off to gaol to see him," says she; but I always was kind o' soft-hearted. Wall, comin' down I stopped over to see Lyddy; and Lydd, she always was sort o' weakly. Jist like mother, Lydd was. 'Member, Lish? She bust out a-cryin' as soon as ever I cum in the door; and "Don't never say another word about Lish," she says. "It was real mean of Lish to give his true name in court," she says. Wall, I s'pose Coriolanus, he'll always be a-throwin' it up against Lydd; and she says it's brought on her chills and fever again;

and Cori, he's partickler "notions about bein' respected."

'Bosh!' interrupted the convict contemptuously.

'Haowf' said Mr. Hezekiah, starting.

'I said bosh!' replied his brother scornfully; 'and I'll say it again if you go on in that infernal, sleek, self-righteous way of yourn. You fool, you! Do you think I don't know what cursed rot it all is? You prophesied I'd come to the States prison, did you? Ef you ain't where I am now it's 'cause you're too sneaky not to be on the windy side of the law. Do you think my mem'ry ain't equal to yourn? Do you think I don't remember how you used to stand on our side of the fence and hold the bag when I was up the tree gettin' the deacon's apples? an' how mother used to take 'em and lay 'em up garret to ripen, and say, "Naow, Lish, I don't want to know where you got 'em"? She was a real sneak, mother was; and you and Lydd's jist like her. But fur me, I took after father, and he hed some courage. To be sure, he wa'n't on the square, no more'n the rest of us, no more'n Cori. D'ye think if Cori'd be'n a real respectable man he'd ha' married into our family?' and here Elisha Dodge smiled a bitter smile that was not without pathos.

The two brothers were alone together in cell No. 4 of the county gaol, a room which does not merit description, inasmuch as it resembled, precisely, dozens of other cells in other county gaols all over the United States. There were

the same white-washed walls, dingy and dirty with rough usage and neglect; the same narrow iron-grated window; the same repulsive-looking bed; the solitary wooden chair. The only exceptional feature in Elisha Dodge's cell was that he occupied the chair and his visitor the bed. In truth, the convict's reception of his brother Hezekiah had been anything but gracious. He had been seated when Hezekiah arrived, and had barely acknowledged his entrance by a nod; and, as he did not offer to resign the chair in which he sat, tilted against the wall, Hezekiah was fain to place himself on the bed, which he did gingerly enough, being a timid man, and not without fears that some deadly weapon might be concealed in the counterpane.

The county paper of the next day, in a florid paragraph, described the farewell between the Dodge brothers as having been of a profoundly affecting nature, and entered at some length into various touching details, which were inventions of its correspondent's brain, particularly one passage, richly adorned with flowers of rhetoric, in which the 'unfortunate convict, deeply stained with crime,' was described as 'clasping the fraternal hand with anguished energy while,' &c. Nothing at all like this passed within the walls of No. 4. Indeed, had the author of the description in question ever happened to see either of the Dodge brothers he might have been less eloquent; Mr. Hezekiah Dodge's personality being so very irritating, not to say rasping, that it would have been difficult to imagine anything pathetic in connection with him, and his brother, the 'unfortunate convict,' so thoroughly contumacious in aspect, that the most bril-

liant imagination would not have represented him as 'clinging to the fraternal hand.'

On this chill January afternoon, with a half-veiled sun looking coldly down from the gray sky, and hardly penetrating through the dusty iron-barred window, Elisha Dodge looked more contumacious than ever, as, with his hat pulled down to his shaggy brows, he sat grimly waiting for a reply to his outburst. It was not long in coming, Mr. Hezekiah Dodge being blest with a flow of words which was more abundant than eloquent. He had started a little when his brother first broke silence, but he soon recovered himself, and replied, slowly, with his usual nasal sing-song,

'Wall, now, Lish, you always was jist the same, kind o' fiery, don't ye know, but you'll allow, I guess, that there's a difference between folks that hez been in the States prison and folks that hesn't. As to Cori, I ain't goin' to say nothing. Perhaps I know suthin' 'bout him, and perhaps I don't; but I guess you'll find he'll contrive to keep out of States prison. He's putty sharp, Cori is, if he ain't on the square, and I ain't findin' fault with you nuther, Lish. You've been real unfortunate, that's what you hev; and I ain't a-goin' to go back on you anyhow. Why, when I was comin' along I 'membered you was awful fond of apple-pies, and I put up two 't wife be'n makin', and a piece o' cheese too. Wall, the turnkey, he was bound to see what was in my bundle. "Lord," I says, "you needn't be afraid I've brought anything to help Lish break gaol!" I says; and then he said 'twas against rules to bring food to the prisoners, "but," he says, "the poor devil's got twenty years, anyhow; I s'pose he may as well hev the

comfort of a pie;" and then he rummaged my pockits and shoes and everything like a good one; but I didn't have no files nor nuthin'.

'Sure of that?' said the convict, suddenly bringing his chair down to all four legs, and darting an indescribably keen look at his brother—a look which seemed to penetrate pockets, shoes, and the lining of his coat all at once.

Hezekiah fidgeted a little and laughed feebly.

'Sure? Yes, of course I'm sure, Lish. I never thought of nothing of the kind. Why, I'd be in danger of gittin' into jail myself if I helped you that way. But here's the pies, safe and sound,' he continued, evidently considering them calculated to soothe whatever mental sufferings his brother might be suffering. 'Ye can't say I didn't think of doin' somethin' to help you, when I brought them pies, Lish. Wall, I says—'

'Shut your jaw, will you? and give us hold,' interrupted Lish ungraciously.

Hezekiah hastened to do so; and it was not until he saw his brother fairly in the middle of the second pie that he left his seat on the corner of the bed and walked about the narrow cell, pinching the coarse garments that hung against the wall, and evidently taking a close survey of the premises.

'Lookin' fur somethin', eh?' said Elisha, suspending his attack upon the pie, and glancing at his brother, with a bitter smile. 'If they rummaged the pockets and shoes of a highly respectable party like you, what do you think they'd do to a poor devil like me? No, no; there ain't nothin' for you. It's a kind o' pity, ain't it? when you took all the trouble to come and see me, and bring me a pie and all. I knowed you wouldn't

do that out of pure brotherly love,' he continued, with a satirical laugh.

'Massy to me, Lish, how riled you be!' returned Hezekiah tranquilly, seating himself on the corner of the bed again, and resuming his former occupation of chewing a straw. 'Course, if you'd ha' had anything you didn't want, or couldn't ha' used to the States prison, why, Hepsy's real handy; she could ha' turned it to account. But we won't talk of nothin' of the sort now. Wall, I've be'n wantin' to know this long time ef you've never heard nothin' of Jake Mulligan. Him and you used to be putty thick along fifteen years back; but his folks ain't never heard nothin', and I allowed you'd know most likely.'

'Who's left of his folks?' interrupted the convict abruptly.

'Wall, strictly speakin', thar ain't no one. Patrick, he shipped in the Ocean Queen nigh ten years ago, and the Ocean Queen's never be'n hurd of from that day to this; and Mary, she died of consumption along five years back. Her husband, he was killed in the war two years before she died. No, there ain't no one except old Vincent—'member, Lish? He married Mis' Mulligan's sister, and then, when she died, he married old aunt Patsy Myers—her with the squeakin' voice. I was a-speakin' to them of Jake suthin' like a month ago. Riled aunt Patsy dreadful it did. She said she'd be real glad ter know Jake was dead, so's't she'd be sure never ter hear of him agin.'

'Did, eh?' said Elisha.

'Did so. Ye see, she's kind of stuck up, and—'

'You can tell her he's dead,' interrupted Elisha.

'How did he die, Lish? Was it consumption or drink, or what?' Elisha laid the wedge of pie and

cheese on his knee, and, inserting his finger into the edge of his cravat, gave it so fearfully natural a twist and jerk that his brother turned pale.

'Massy to me, Lish, you don't mean it?' he stammered.

'I do, then,' said the convict. 'He was an awful clever house-breaker, Jake was; and once, findin' an old lady asleep, he give her some chloroform to keep her quiet, and went off with the prag, leavin' her asleep, as he thought. But in the mornin' she was dead; and they caught poor Jakey, and he hed to swing for it. It seemed real hard; for Jake was a good-hearted fellow that wouldn't have hurt a fly if he'd hed his way, and never meant to harm the old lady no more'n a baby would. But 'twas brought home to him, and there wa'n't no help for't. Mary, she was alive then, and so he give the name of Pat Barney on his trial; but I reckon he'd have be'n right down glad to have that squeakin' old cat Patsy Vincent know't he'd be'n hung; sence it had to be, that is. You ken tell Patsy, Hezek.''

'Do tell!' returned Hezekiah faintly. 'Wall, yes, I'll tell her; it'll take 'em down a peg or two, I guess, t' know they've had relations, ez you may say, hung. Wall, wall!'

'Don't go and make no reflections on it, Hezekiah,' interrupted Elisha peremptorily. 'Things has gone uncommon contrairy with me; but I ain't come down to settin' as still as a settin' hen o' purpose to hear you preach.'

There was a gleam in Elisha's eye as he said this which might have intimidated a braver man than Mr. Hezekiah Dodge, and which intimated clearly enough an intention on his part to proceed to personal violence if he were further irritated.

'Sakes alive, Lish!' replied Hezekiah, edging away a little as he spoke; 'I don't mean to preach. I only come here sort of friendly, to see how you was gettin' along, and now you blow out and git mad. But I ain't mad, Lish; I come to see ef perhaps you'd feel free to open your mind, and—'

'Open a fiddlestick!' interrupted Elisha impatiently. 'What the devil are you hankering after, Hezek? Out with it. I know you're after something as well as I know you're a sneak.'

'Wall, Lish, I know you've got a heap o' things on your mind; and they say you ain't owned up to nothin' yet; and I thought most likely you'd feel opener with me, and—'

'You did, did you?' interrupted his brother scornfully. 'I s'pose you thought I'd got a heap o' things stowed away somewheres that you could take care of while I was rotting in gaol, did you?'

'There naow, Lish,' said Hezekiah, evidently relieved that the ice was broken; 'I always did say's you was the smartest of us all. I *was* thinkin' perhaps you'd got somethin' laid away somewheres 't you couldn't git a hold of while you was in prison, and thet I could kinder look after untill you got out again. I wouldn't run no risks, Lish; but ef there was anything buried in the ground, or any spot's 'twasn't dangerous for me to look after it—'

'I see,' said Elisha, with dangerous calmness. 'Ef there was a heap of money and jewels buried in some field where 'twa'n't too lonesome, and yet lonesome enough, or ef I'd hid some lady's di'mond necklace in a empty old hen-coop somewheres where ye could put your hand on it 'thout fear of the roosters flyin' at ye, that'd be about your ticket, He-

zek—somethin' easy and handy, eh?

Hezekiah fidgeted a little and laughed feebly.

'I tell you what, Lish, I'd take real good care of anythin', he said, in an ingratiating tone.

'There ain't nothing for you to take care of,' replied Elisha, with a scornful laugh.

'Do ye reely mean that, Lish?' said Hezekiah, too much intent upon his object to notice the scorn in Elisha's tone, or the anger gathering about his brows. 'Wall, I reely wouldn't hev believed it, ef you hedn't told me. Massy to me! You hev made a mull of it, hev'n't ye?'

'Mull of it!' replied Elisha. 'Well, perhaps I have; but I know—'

Whatever he was about to say was interrupted by Hezekiah, who, rising suddenly, went on elaborate tiptoe to the door, where he listened for a couple of seconds, then, laying his finger on his lips, he returned to his seat on the bed.

'See here, Lish,' he said, leaning forward and laying a pudgy clammy hand on Elisha's reluctant knee; 'blood's thicker'n water—you'll allow that, I guess—and seein' 't's you was the only party caught in that affair of Mr. Ross Greene's family plate, I allowed you most likely know'd where 'twas. Wall, seein' 't you can't—that it won't be no good to you for twenty year—I sh'd think you might give a feller an idee where't was. Ef 'tain't no ways dangerous—'

For the first time a gleam of something like humour darted across Elisha's gloomy face.

'Ef 'tain't no ways dangerous you'll be kind enough to go and find that 'ere silver, and melt it down, eh?' he replied.

'I'd save a part for you, Lish;

I would reely,' interrupted Hezekiah.

'Ye would, eh? Mighty generous, ain't ye, all at once? Jest now you was goin' to take care of it for me, but let you once get your fingers on it— It's fine plate, that is, Hezek, the biggest haul I ever made; and ye guessed right for once in your life. Nobody but me knows where 'tis.'

'Do tell!' exclaimed Hezekiah eagerly.

'Blood's thicker'n water, as you say,' continued the convict slowly, in a satirical tone. 'What a fine thing 'twould be for our highly respectable family to come in possession of that 'ere silver. Guess Cori'd be glad to own me for a brother-in-law ef he could get his fingers on to it, eh?'

'Yes, yes,' said Hezekiah, alive with expectation.

'Yes, you're right there. Cori'd be real proud of me,' said Elisha, with a grim smile.

'Yes, Lish, yes; where—where is it?' stammered Hezekiah, with trembling eagerness.

'In a safe place,' returned the prisoner seriously; 'safe and dark and secure. There's a key turned on it; but no one's likely to use the key—from choice at least. The silver might lie where 'tis till the Day o' Judgment, afore anybody'd go to find any treasure in that place.'

Hezekiah had risen, and now pressed up to his brother, trembling with eagerness and greed.

'Where—where is it, Lish?' he stammered.

Elisha closed one eye, and shot a glance of extreme cunning at his brother with the other.

'Never you mind, Hezek,' he said coolly. 'It's where it won't do me no good, and where it sha'n't do you no good—you, nor Hepsy, nor Liddy, nor Cori, nor none of you. Now git out, will

ye! Ef you was to stay here till doomsday, you wouldn't find out nothing more. I ain't a-going to tall, and that's the hull of it.'

'Ef—ef I was to help you break gaol, Lish? Me'n, Cori, perhaps we could manage it between us.'

'Manage it, then,' returned the convict calmly, 'and I'll pay ye both wall for't afterwards. No payments in advance in my business, Hezek. Come,' he continued more sternly, rising as he did so, 'I've had about enough of your company, Mr. Hezekiah Dodge. I'm very thankful to you for that 'ere apple-pie, but I was always kind of lovin' in my disposition, and I guess the Ross Greene silver'd be too high a price to pay for 't. Clear out, will ye?' he added, with a sudden dangerous flash in his eye.

'Massey to me, Lish,' said Hezekiah, gathering himself and his bundle together with evident trepidation, 'what a mean, grudgin', evil disposition you've got yet! It's plain to be seen 't you're in the gall of bitterness an' the bonds of death, and there ain't the first beginnin' of grace in you, and I always did say's you was the most—'

Whatever he was about to say was cut short by the entrance of the turnkey; and the Dodge brothers parted without even a nod of farewell.

The turnkey lingered a moment, cast a sharp glance round the cell, then the door shut, and Elisha was alone. His first act was to pull his hat off and throw it on the bed; then he ran his fingers through his hair, stood up, and stretched himself.

'Bah,' he said, glancing at the small bit of gray sky visible through the iron grating, 'I always did feel 's if I needed a whole skyful of air to breathe after be-

in' shut up with Hezek, damned sneak and hypocrite that he is! Ef feelin' the error of your ways is bein' repentant though, I guess I'm a repentant sinner, ef there is one in the Union!' and he broke into a low, joyless laugh.

The door opened, and the turnkey put his head in.

'Happy to see you enjoyin' your own society, No. 4,' said he ironically. 'It's a pity to interrupt you, but the temporary chaplain's here again, and would be pleased to see you if you're in a better frame of mind than you was the other day; and if you feel more like makin' a clean breast of it, and—'

'No, sir-ee,' returned the convict, 'I ain't made a clean breast to him, nor to no one else, and I ain't goin' to, nuther. I don't want none of his advice, nor none of his consolations neither. Tell him to clear out, will you?' he continued, as he sat down again, pulled his hat over his eyes, tilted his chair against the wall, and evidently prepared himself for dogged deafness and silence.

The turnkey shrugged his shoulders, laughed, and departed. As he was delivering the convict's message to the temporary chaplain, a man as little fitted for his office as rolling stones are apt to be, a carriage drove up to the gaol, and a gentleman alighted, who immediately made known his desire to see the prisoner.

'A most stubborn and evil character he is,' said the chaplain, with warmth; 'I would strongly advise you, sir, not to attempt to see him.'

'He ain't in the best of humours, that's a fact,' said the turnkey, with a laugh. 'Fact is he's kind o' riled up 'cause folks is always tryin' to find out somethin' from him. His brother, he was here this afternoon, and left

him riled up more'n ever; but ef you had anything partickler to say to him, or was anything to him—'

'I cannot, certainly, claim to be related to the prisoner,' replied the gentleman, laughing, 'but I have a sort of connection with him, inasmuch as he stole my silver.'

'Do tell!' exclaimed the turnkey eagerly. 'I'll show you in, sir, right away. No. 4's off to the States prison at seven o'clock this evenin'; but there's lots of time yet. Not that there's any use in it, if you expect to hear anything of your silver. He's as stubborn as a mule, No. 4 is, and he wouldn't tell where 'twas anyway; but, of course, it's be'n made away with long ago.'

'Melted down most likely,' put in one of the by-standers.

'Very probably,' said Mr. Ross Greene; 'but, nevertheless, I have some curiosity to know when and how. So, if you please, we will go to No. 4,' he added, turning to the turnkey. 'Don't tell him who I am.'

When the turnkey announced the visitor, which he did curtly enough, Elisha glanced up doggedly, expecting the chaplain; a member of the Young Men's Christian Association, with a tract; or a lawyer, armed with pen and paper, to write out his confession. He was accustomed to conceal his emotions, but his face cleared involuntarily when he perceived that the handsome and well-dressed man before him was none of these. Gloomily and sulkily enough he rose, and yielded his chair to the visitor, who sat down easily, with a pleasant nod. He was quick in reading faces, and perceived that, though not welcome to the prisoner, he was evidently less unwelcome than he had prepared

himself to expect. He proceeded to business by lighting a fine cigar, and handing another to Elisha.

'I daresay you won't mind joining me in a cigar?' said he smiling. 'The fact is, I wanted to see you on a matter entirely personal to myself, and I thought you might not refuse to gratify my curiosity, particularly as I do not ask you to incriminate any one, even if you would. And I daresay you would not,' he added quickly, perceiving that the prisoner was about to interrupt him. 'I have perfect confidence in my servants; so that I shall not ask you if they gave you a helping hand—'

'Are you Mr. Ross Greene?' said Elisha hastily.

'I am. And though every one has told me that no doubt the silver was melted down as soon as stolen, I thought you would be likely to know if a piece were in existence, or, at any rate, that you could tell me when and where it was melted. Of course, if I know that it is hopeless for me to think of seeing it again, I shall trouble myself no more about it; but I thought that, under the circumstances, it could make no difference to you—'

'The silver ain't melted,' interrupted the convict.

'No?'

'No; and, as far as I know, nobody but me knows where 'tis. It's no good to me where it lies; and 'tain't likely to be disturbed by no one; and 'tain't likely neither that twenty years 'll pass without its bein' found.'

He paused, and seemed to consider; but Mr. Ross Greene was too wise to interrupt him.

'Guess I'll tell ye the whole,' he resumed suddenly. 'I'd as leave you'd have the silver as any one; and 'twon't do me no good

where 'tis. See here,' he continued, leaning forward, with his arms on his knees, 'ever since I've be'n here folks has be'n naggin' me to confess, and all the time I was thinkin' "Damned if I will!" and kinder laughin' to think ef they only knowed where that 'ere silver was hid how they'd all scamper off to nab it. Wall, 'tain't no use to go back and tell you how the house was broke into. You was after us putty quick, so quick that we hadn't no time to melt the silver down. We meant to do it at a certain place—never mind where, but outside the town; and the silver was all packed together in a bag that was rigged up to look like a pedlar's pack. It fell to me to carry it; and the fust night I tried it I found I was watched; and, after doublin' and turnin' considerable, I had to put back to cover again. I kept very quiet for two days, and then I tried it again, and I found I was bein' watched closer'n ever; but my grit was up, and I was bound I'd git out into the country anyway. So I did, along the high road to Dayton. It was snowin' like anything, and bitter cold. I'd got about half a mile out of town, I guess, when I found I was bein' tracked, and got up behind some evergreens at the side of the road. I waited there till I was 'most froze, then I found 'twan't no use to try and save myself and the silver too; so I pitched it over a fence into a field. It was snowin' so hard that I calculated it'd lie safe enough for a day or two anyway, and I made a mark on the fence, so'st I could know it again; then I made tracks for a hiding as fast as I could. The next night I found 'twan't no use to venture out; I was bein' watched too close, and so for two days and nights. All this while

I was awful worried about the silver; but I was bound to have a try for 't anyhow. The third night I thought I was in luck. I got safe out of town again, along as far as where I'd made the mark on the fence. The silver was there all right, and I was glad enough to get it on my back again. This time I thought I'd be on the safe side; so instead of goin' on along the high road, I struck into a little cross road that leads up to Croxton Bridge. 'Twa'n't no use; I found I was bein' followed again; so I turned into the Old Cemetery gate. I was kinder surprised to find it open; but I went on till I come to two or three tall evergreen trees, and then I stood still to listen. By George! ef I didn't hear some one after me again! I kept as still as a mouse; then I heard a voice say, "He come in here, I know, with the pack on his back." Then I hurd 'em talkin' on, how one was to stand here and another there, and so on. I know'd then 'twan't no time to try and save the silver; but what the devil to do with it I didn't know. Just then I noticed close by where I was standin' there was an open tomb; the pickaxes and spades was standing round; as if the men had quit work late in the evenin'. I hadn't no time to lose, and I pitched the silver into the tomb, and I guess it's there now, if nobody ain't died sence.'

'Do you remember the appearance of the tomb?' said Mr. Greene.

'No, I don't; and the night was so dark that I couldn't see nothing. All I know is, there was a pine-tree planted each side of the door, and I made a deep jagged cut in one of the trees with my knife. I couldn't do more—I had no time. I was nabbed the next morning.'

'Thank you,' said Mr. Ross Greene, rising, as the key was turned in the door.

'See here,' said the convict, rising also; 'don't you tell nobody till you've found that 'ere silver. There's many a slip between the cup and the lip, you know.'

'I will be careful; thank you,' said Mr. Greene, laughing, as he followed the turnkey.

'Home, sir?' said the coachman, as he took his seat in the carriage.

'No; to the Old Cemetery.'

'After all, a pine-tree planted on each side of the door is no very good landmark,' said Mr. Ross Greene to himself, as he was bowled along rapidly over the road which led to the Old Cemetery; 'and who knows that the man was speaking the truth? He looked a clever audacious fellow, quite capable of enjoying the idea of my rummaging these old tombs like a vampire.'

Indeed, in any case, the indication given by the convict was none of the clearest, as there were many vaults in the Old Cemetery with pine-trees before the door. Before the gate of the Old Cemetery was reached, Mr. Greene had quite reasoned himself into incredulity, and got out of the carriage indifferently enough. He walked slowly up the broad central alley, glancing right and left at the pine-trees which flanked the doors of the vaults on either side, and congratulated himself on having been previously prepared for disappointment; when he observed that there was not a mark on any one of them. Still, since he was a man who was in

the habit of doing things thoroughly, he turned to walk down a cross alley, when he was accosted by the keeper with,

'Your vault's in the angle to the left, near the wall, Mr. Greene.'

'Mine!' he replied, starting. 'I have no vault here.'

'Well, old Miss Betsy's, Ross's vault, anyway. I heerd she'd left it to you, along with her other property, and it's one of the handsomest vaults there is here. I've be'n kinder surprised that we ain't seen you here before,' continued the keeper, with a fine sense of hospitality.

'It is true, I ought to have come,' said Mr. Greene; 'but the poor old lady died while I was in Europe, and I confess that I have been in no hurry to take possession of this part of my inheritance,' he added, with a smile.

'Here it is,' said the keeper.

'By Jove, so it is,' exclaimed Mr. Greene.

But he was not admiring the vault, though it was as handsome as a vault can be. He was looking at the two pine-trees which flanked the entrance. A deep jagged cut disfigured one of them, and within the low door, when it was opened, was found a pedlar's pack, containing the lost silver.

No. 4 was removed to the States prison that night. His conduct there does not concern this story. Suffice it to say that, every now and then, little alleviations of his captivity reach him, and that he knows as well as if he had been told in words that the silver was found where he left it, and that these gifts are the results of his confession.

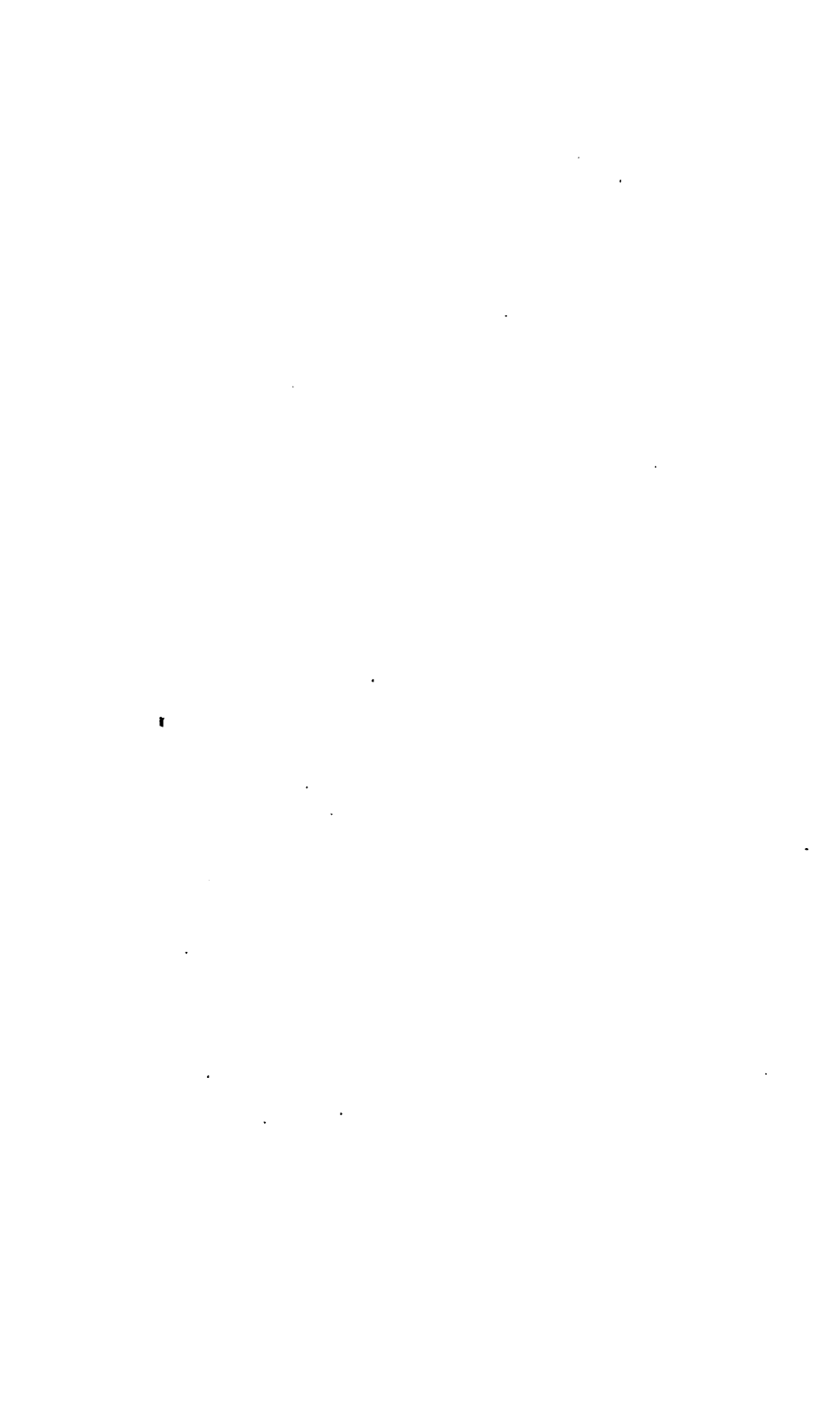
M. L. T.





ROMANCE OF A PICTURE IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

See 'PARMIGIANO.'



STORIES OF THE PICTURES IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

PARMIGIANO.

(*With a Portrait.*)

THE average Briton can scarcely be expected to realise the world of interest which attaches to his art-property in Trafalgar-square—the masterpieces which he has either inherited or purchased under the guidance of the cultivated taste and the watchful judgment of his specialists. Some romantic incidents connected with these famous pictures and their painters we propose to narrate at intervals, commencing with Parmigiano. The knowledge may add zest to the next visit of many readers to the National Gallery.

Nothing is so small as not to be dignified, and in the best sense magnified, by virtue and culture and genius. A line of under two hundred miles drawn from Venice to Genoa would, with a few deviations, thread the historic pearls of an encyclopædic civilisation and refinement. What memories throng, for instance, around the names of Milan, of Mantua, of Parma, of Modena, of Bologna, of Florence—cities of the region in which the arts revived from the death or stupor of ages, under the touch of the commercial enterprise and splendour which drew from the Crusades their impulse and their influence! Genoa, Pisa, Florence, Venice, and others became new capitals, centres of wealth, and of the most magnificent concomitants and productions of wealth. Their merchants were princes, and their merchant-princes dwelt in palaces gorgeous with

their marble staircases, their lofty stories, their gilded and painted ceilings. Besides being enriched with the spoils of the Oriental world, their churches came to be adorned with the grandest monuments of the Renaissance. Elaborate mosaics, exquisite paintings, costly marbles, precious stones, and vessels in gold and silver, in almost incredible profusion, were the glory—a glory accused of not being without its shame—of the temples and religious edifices of the period, into whose worship the almost voluptuous swell of music was prodigally incorporated.

But the whole force of the Renaissance was seen at its mightiest in the surprising development of sculpture and painting under its auspices. The great masters of the time have ever since remained peerless; the artists of to-day, the creatures and exponents of more than one sub-revival, gaze upon the richness and variety of their glorious productions with feelings compounded of envy, admiration, and despair. Florence, Bologna, Venice, and Rome became seats of various schools, of which Michael Angelo, the Caracci, Titian, and Raphael were among the most distinguished representatives.

Of the cities above mentioned Bologna is supposed to be the only one in Italy which can boast of native painters born so early as the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; an era from which de-

scend the names, and even—but not without serious challenge of their authenticity—the works, of Guido, Venturo, and Ursone. Down to the end of the fifteenth century Bologna, known as the sanctuary of Lombard art, was the meeting-ground of painters from all parts of Italy and Germany. Its school was rather eclectic than distinctive, and, as every artist followed or formed his own peculiar style or manner, it fostered at once independence and incorporation. This quality of eclecticism attached to the school of Bologna as a reputation at every stage of its existence, and was by few more happily exemplified than by the distinguished artist, Francesco Maria Mazzola, or Mazzuoli, who derived his sobriquet of Parmigiano, or Parmigianino, from his birthplace of Parma—one of the five or six local schools which made up the aggregate of the schools of Lombardy, and the one which imparted its most distinctive character to Lombard painting. This was the city of his earliest study and of his almost latest production, with an all too short, but richly assimilative, intermediate career at Rome and at Bologna.

The visit of Correggio to Parma in 1521 made Parmigiano familiar with the style and productions of that master, whose grace and sweetness are the perfection of the germs to be discovered in the works of Mantegna; and he studied them with so singular a devotion and success as to lead Vasari to affirm that Parmigiano was 'superior to Correggio, in many respects excelling him in grace, in profusion of ornament, and in beauty of manner. This may be seen in many of his pictures, wherein the countenances smile as in nature, while the eyes look forth with the most life-like

animation; or in other cases, where the spectator perceives the pulses actually beating, accordingly as it pleased the pencil of the artist to portray them.* More modern and impartial criticism, however, has discovered that while Parmigiano attempted to surpass Correggio in grace, he did not always escape the charge and the reality of affectation. The seductive elegance of contour for which his figures are remarkable sometimes degenerates into an unnatural slenderness, as the contrast in their attitudes, frequently attained by a consummate knowledge of colour and *chiaroscuro*, is sometimes obnoxious to the charge of extravagance.

A little later, Parmigiano bowed himself to the influences of Michael Angelo and Raphael, and sought to emulate the majestic energy of the one, and the dignity and grandeur of the other; and this, again, so successfully that, as Vasari reports, it was said at Rome that 'the soul of Raphael had passed into Parmigiano'—the same sentiment finding another form of expression in the designation he received of 'Il Raffaellino.'

Francesco Maria Mazzola was born at Parma on the 11th of January 1503, the son of Filippo Mazzola, a painter of no good repute, and called Filippo dell' Erbette, according to Masselli, because he succeeded better in depicting flowers and vegetable products than figures. By the premature death of this comparatively humble artist, the guardianship of the child Francesco, then only a few years old, devolved upon his two uncles, Michele and Piero Ilario, brothers of his father, and both of them painters. So true and so *rathe* was his artistic genius that he used his pen for

* *Lives of the most eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects.*

designing before he could employ it with any effect for writing; and his startling and precocious vivacity dictated without an alternative the choice of his profession. Instructed at first by his uncles, he was subsequently placed by them under the best masters the place and the circumstances allowed; and he so profited by their training and advice that at the age of sixteen, 'after having effected wonders in design, he painted a picture entirely of his own invention and composition, representing the Baptism of our Saviour Christ by San Giovanni, and executed in so fine a manner, that notwithstanding what he had previously done, yet all who beheld it were struck with astonishment at seeing such a work produced by a boy. This picture was placed in the Nunziata at Parma, where the monks of the Zoccoli, or barefooted friars, have their abode; and more recently adorned the collection of the noble family of San Vitali of Parma. Not content with this, Francesco determined also to try his skill in fresco; whereupon he painted a chapel in San Giovanni Evangelista, which belongs to the Black Friars of San Benedetto, and succeeded so well in that kind of decoration that he ultimately painted seven chapels for the same confraternity.'

After painting some other pictures at Viandana—to which he had been sent by his uncles, with his cousin Girolamo, the son of Michele, during the war which brought the troops of Leo X. to Parma, under the command of Prospero Colonna, he returned to Parma, and, besides completing pictures left unfinished at the time of his departure, painted a Madonna with the Infant Christ in

her arms, and having on one side San Jeronimo, with the Beato Bernardino da Feltro on the other, 'a work,' says Vasari, 'of such extraordinary merit, that only the living soul could make it better. All these paintings were finished before our artist had attained the age of nineteen.'

Incited at once by the most generous of artistic aspirations and by the hopes of Papal promotion, Francesco repaired to Rome in 1523, where the professional and social credentials with which he was fortified, and the personal credentials with which he was gifted in the shape of a beauty rather angelic than human, 'like something divine,' as Vasari says, procured him much favour and admiration, together with an introduction to Pope Clement VII. This Pontiff, the firm and constant protector of Machiavelli, had been elected, November 19th, 1523, to the chair of Peter, on the death of Hadrian VI., thus inflicting on our own Cardinal Wolsey a repetition of his disappointment in not having succeeded to the tiara on the decease of Leo X., some two years previously.

It was the temporising conduct of Clement VII. with reference to the marriage of Henry VIII. to Anne Boleyn which caused the abolition of the Papal supremacy in this country. In secular life he was known as Giulio de' Medici, an illegitimate son of Giuliano de' Medici, brother of Lorenzo, the Magnificent, who was killed in the conspiracy of the Pazzi, at Florence, in 1478. Giulio entered into the Order of the Knights of Rhodes, whose standard he bore at the coronation of his cousin, Leo X., who declared him legitimate, created him Archbishop of Florence, and afterwards promoted him to the cardinalate and the chancellorship

* Vasari's *Lives of the most eminent Painters, &c.*

of the Roman Church. During the pontificate of Leo, who, in the spirit of Abraham Cowley, regarded business as a 'grave impertinence,' and as the 'contradiction of his fate,' he had the chief conduct of affairs; and after the death of Hadrian VI. he was, as already mentioned, by a coalition of parties, unanimously elected to the vacant chair in 1523.

Clement VII. belonged, therefore, to that scheming race which twice contrived to secure for its members the highest dignity in contemporary Christendom; to that splendidly-endowed family which knew how to adapt its actions, with the greatest nicety, to every phase of human disposition. Never was the heavy garb of absolute power assumed with more insinuating grace than by them, while its authority was being usurped with more firmly-fixed intentions of unmitigated despotism. Every talent and specious artifice were forthcoming at command—glittering splendour which bore the semblance of generosity, profuse tastes which were the mask of liberal likings, the flow of honeyed speech, and even the dazzling halo of poetic genius were showered upon them. One faculty alone was wholly wanting in that arsenal of family qualities—the rough stern daring of soldier-like prowess. No Medici was a warrior, except one cadet of a side branch, and he died young, before doing service in the family cause. And so it happened that, in 1527, pent up within the walls of St. Angelo, Clement VII., in all the sacredness of his pontifical dignity, saw himself reduced to the sacrilegious humiliation of having to purchase immunity from personal violence by bowing low before the drunken freebooters of the Bourbon's soldiery.

The foregoing sentence is a

little in advance of our progress; and we turn back for a moment to say how Parmigiano received from Clement VII. the most splendid and responsible commissions, the successful execution of which involved the enhancement of his fortune and reputation. One of the works produced at this time was a picture of the Circumcision, which was so valued by the Pope that he retained it for his own personal possession, and which, through several removes of proprietorship, has passed into the possession of the Emperor of Austria, by whom it is preserved in the Gallery of the Belvedere at Vienna.

Trouble, as we have just indicated, fell upon the Pope in 1527, two years after the battle of Pavia, in which King Francis I. 'lost everything except honour,' and was, in consequence, confined in a fortress at Madrid until he promised to the imperial victor, Charles V., the complete dismemberment of France. No sooner had he recovered his liberty than he violated all his oaths, and Europe became the scene of reopened hostilities. The passion of revenge was now added to that of ambition, and as the Pope had favoured the cause of France, the generals of Charles invaded Italy. Rome was taken and sacked by the Constable Bourbon, a French noble whom Francis had slighted, and who refused to acknowledge a truce which had been concluded between Clement VII. and the ministers of Charles V.

It was during the assault and sack of Rome, attended by cruelties and outrages unprecedented under such leaders as Alaric or Attila, and whilst the Pope was interceding with Heaven in his oratory, that a painter worked upon a masterpiece, absorbed and ignorant of the din of the battle

that wrecked and devastated the eternal city.

The painter was Parmigiano, and the picture of his devotion was 'The Vision of St. Jerome,' now in our National Gallery. It is an altar-piece, which was painted, on a commission from Maria Bufalina, for the church of St. Salvatore in Lauro, in Citta di Castella. Here it remained until the earthquake in 1780, after which it was purchased by M. Durno, and subsequently came into the possession of Mr. Hart-Davies, at the price of 6000*l*. For size, it is one of the chief works of the master, being eleven feet six inches high by four feet eleven inches in width. 'There is something grand and poetical,' Waagen observes, 'in the design representing the Virgin in glory with the Infant Christ; between them, St. John the Baptist, with his back turned towards the spectator, and pointing upwards with the most fervent enthusiasm, as announcing Christ. This beautiful head of the Infant Christ is worthy of Correggio, and the figure approaches that master in delicacy of relief. St. John, on the one hand, is most solidly painted in glowing golden tones, and is of prodigious effect. In the affected and extravagant attitudes we clearly see the vain endeavour to combine the grandeur of Michael Angelo, in form and motion, with the graceful flow and the relief of Correggio. The least satisfactory part of the picture is St. Jerome asleep—a figure very ungracefully foreshortened—who is supposed to behold all that we have above described in a vision; some parts, too, which have been badly retouched, injure the effect. This picture is, notwithstanding, worthy of admiration for the astonishing perfection of execution, especially when we

consider that Parmigiano was only twenty-four years of age when he painted it.*

'But this work,' says Vasari, in a passage which brings into more graphic relief the romance of the picture, 'the master was not suffered to bring to perfection, the sack and ruin of Rome in 1527 interrupting his labours; and not only did this event cause the arts for a time to be banished from that city, but it also cost the life of many artists. Francesco was, indeed, within a hair's breadth of being among the number, which happened in this wise. In the commencement of the plunder, and when the soldiers began to burst into the houses, our artist was so intent on his work that, when his own dwelling was filled with certain of these men, who were Germans, he remained undisturbed by their clamours, and did not move from his place. Arriving in the room, therefore, and finding him thus employed, they stood confounded at the beauty of the paintings they beheld, and, like good and sensible men, as they must have been, they permitted him to continue his occupation. Thus, while the most impious cruelty of the barbarous hordes, by whom the unhappy town was invested, was scourging that miserable place, having respect neither to God nor man, Francesco was provided for by those Germans, who honoured him greatly, and defended him from any kind of injury. One loss only did our artist suffer at that time from these events, namely, that one of the soldiers in question, being a great lover of painting and the arts, compelled him to execute a large number of drawings in water-colour and with the pen, which he demanded as the payment of his ransom.'

* *Treasures of Art in Great Britain.*

From the ruin of Rome and the eclipse of his Papal patron, Francesco repaired to Bologna, from the nobles and ecclesiastics of which city he received numerous commissions for pictures and other works of his genius. Among the first of these was a figure of San Rocco, painted for the church of San Patronio; a Conversion of St. Paul; and the Madonna della Rosa, now in the Dresden Gallery, which he had changed from a Venus to the Virgin with the Infant Christ. This picture he presented to Pope Clement VII., who visited Bologna, there meeting Charles V., who came to that city in 1530 for the purpose of receiving the crown of Italy from the Pope.

In 1531 Parmigiano returned to his native Parma, reëntering it, after all his vicissitudes of fortune, as a man of reputation rather than wealth or substance. Here he engaged to execute several extensive frescoes for the church of Santa Maria della Steccata; and at the same time undertook a picture of Cupid preparing his bow, now in the Bridgewater Gallery. The great artist neglected his task-work, however, to such an extent that the confraternity who employed him instituted a law-suit against him for breach of

contract, from the consequences of which he thought it prudent to extricate himself by withdrawing to Casal Maggiore, in the territory of Cremona, where, after alternating researches in alchemy with the prosecution of his art, he died on the 24th of August 1540. The assertion of this addiction to alchemy, which rests on the plausible authority of his enthusiastic admirer Vasari, who imputes his ruin thereto, has been discredited by later researches, and there is no reason unreservedly to accept it. Considering the time, there was enough of verisimilitude about the report to make it pass current for truth.

The altar-pieces of Parmigiano are not many in number, and his easel-paintings, which are rather scarce, are distributed in the galleries of Northern Italy and in other European collections. Several of his drawings are in the British Museum, and some thirty of his productions, in one kind or another, are to be found in the galleries of this country. He was the first to introduce the art of etching into Italy, and so very commonly passed as its inventor. But this honour is rather to be referred to Albert Dürer, the great artist of Nuremberg.

WHIST STORIES.

Not only, says Mr. Abraham Hayward, did we never meet with, or hear of, a whist-player who could venture to boast with Turenne that he never fought a battle that he did not deserve to win, but we have heard an excellent one adopt the aphorism attributed to the Iron Duke, that a battle was a game in which those who made the fewest blunders won. Or a parallel may be drawn between the paladin of the whist-table and the damsel in the play, who took her married sister's fault upon herself, and is thus apostrophised by her brother-in-law, 'Quoi, vous, Marie! vous, la vertu même!' Her reply is exquisite for feminine self-knowledge and tact: 'O la vertu, la vertu! tout le monde a ses heures ou ses moments.' The most consummate skill, like Virtue herself, is not safe against a slip. Did not the late Earl Granville lose a rubber, after giving the long odds in thousands, by forgetting the seven of hearts? Did not Henry Lord de Ros lose one, on which 3000*l.* were staked, by miscounting a trump? Did not, only the other day, the Daniel or Gamaliel of the Turf Club fail to detect a palpable revoke, to the astonishment and (it must be owned) gratification of the bystanders, some of whom went home consoled and elevated in their own self-esteem by his default?

A curious piece of evidence was given at the De Ros trial by a distinguished whist-player, who stated that he had played regularly for about the same stakes during twenty years; that his

winnings had averaged 1500*l.* a year, making 30,000*l.* in the aggregate; but that he had undergone two consecutive years of ill-luck, during which he lost 8000*l.* Another witness, a captain in the navy, who had realised a regular income by his skill, was asked whether he was not in the habit of dining on boiled chicken and lemonade when he had serious work in hand; and the alleged training (which he denied) was no imputation on his sagacity. No man flushed with food or wine, *vinoque ciboque gravatus*, will play his best; and every man who regards his purse or his reputation should leave off when he finds the sensation of confusion or fatigue stealing upon him.

A master of the art (Lord H. Bentinck), who had survived a generation, was asked who were the best whist-players he ever knew. He instantly named three: the late Earl Granville, the Hon. George Anson, and Henry Lord de Ros. On being asked for the fourth, he paused, but there was no need of hesitation: 'Ed io anche sono pittore.' No one would have accused him of undue assumption if he had followed the example of Lamartine, who, on being asked who was the first living French poet, drew himself up with an air of offended dignity and replied, 'Moi.' The palm was popularly considered to lie between Lord Henry Bentinck and Mr. Clay, whose styles were so essentially different that an instructive parallel might be drawn between them after the manner of Plutarch. We regret to say that

great whist-players resemble rival beauties in one respect. Rarely will one admit the distinguished merit, not to say superiority, of another.

The De Ros affair was a sad blow and a temporary discredit to whist-players, for some of them were unluckily seduced into acting on the penultimate Lord Hertford's maxim: 'What would you do if you saw a man cheating at cards?' 'Bet on him, to be sure.' Lord de Ros's methods of aiding his skill were only available for one hand in four—when he dealt. He then occasionally contrived to turn an honour by what is called *sauter la coupe*, and, having marked the higher honours with his nail, he could see to whom they fell. During the burst of scandalous comment which followed the exposure, one of the 'bitter fools' of society, who would never have been admitted to his intimacy, drawled out at Crockford's: 'I would leave my card at his house, but I fear he would mark it.' The retort was ready: 'That would depend upon whether he considered it a *high* honour.' This repartee, popularly assigned to Lord Alvanley, was made by Charles Kinnaird Sheridan (the youngest brother of the three gifted sisters of the race), whose untimely and deeply regretted death, in the bloom of his brilliant youth, was a *memento mori* which not the gayest or most thoughtless of his gay contemporaries could speedily shake off.

There is a well-authenticated story of the late Lord Granville's devotion to whist. Intending to set out in the course of the afternoon for Paris, he ordered his carriage and four posters to be at Graham's at four. They were kept waiting till ten, when he sent out to say that he should not

be ready for another hour or two, and that the horses had better be changed. They were changed three times in all, at intervals of six hours, before he started. When the party rose they were up to their ankles in cards, and the ambassador, it was reported, was a loser to the tune of eight or ten thousand pounds. About this time there was a set at Brooks's—Lord Sefton, an excellent player, being one—who played hundred guinea points, besides bets. We still occasionally hear of three hundred and five hundred pounds on the rubber, but five pound points are above the average; and many of the best players are content with two pound points (ten, bet) at the Turf, and ten shillings at the Portland. A good deal of money is turned on the five to two (really nearer three to one) bet on the rubber after the first game.

There used to be high play at Berlin and Vienna. Count Palfy won enough at a single sitting of Prince John of Lichtenstein to build and furnish a château. It was shown to the loser, who, on being asked how he liked it, replied, 'Pas du tout; cela a tout-à-fait l'air d'un château de cartes.' There is a current anecdote of Count Rechberg, late Secretary for Foreign Affairs in Austria, which justifies a surmise that he also is a proficient, though, like a good many other inveterate whist-players, he seems to think that everything is fair at cards. His left-hand adversary—*proh pudor*, an Englishman—made so desperate, though successful, a finesse, that his excellency uttered an exclamation of surprise, whereupon the gentleman offered a bet that the Count himself should acknowledge that he had a sound reason for his play. It was taken, and he then

coolly said, 'Why, I looked over your hand.' This gentleman must have graduated under the Artful Dodger, who, while playing dummy in Fagin's den, is commended for 'wisely regulating his play by the result of his observation on his neighbour's cards.'

Some forty years since, a remarkable set used to meet in Berlin at Prince Wittgenstein's, including Count Alopeus, the Russian Minister, General Nostitz, Henry Bulwer (then attached to the Berlin Embassy), and the Duke of Cumberland (afterwards King of Hanover). Another of the Royal Family, the late Duke of York, played whist a great deal, and lost a large amount of money at it—as well he might, for he invariably showed by his face whether he was satisfied or dissatisfied with his cards, and played them indifferently into the bargain. He played pony points (twenty-five pounds) and fifty bet, making the full or bumper rubber two hundred and fifty pounds. One evening, having won three full rubbers of a wealthy *parvenu*, he was reluctantly reminded that there was a prior loss of some four thousand pounds to be set off. 'No, no,' he protested, 'that will never do; we have nothing to do with old scores;' and the man was fool enough to pay. There is no royal road to whist, and as royal personages with the best natural dispositions rarely submit to be taught, it is fortunate that the kingly power has been limited since Canute, who had a courtier hanged for check-mating him, and would doubtless have had him hanged, drawn, and quartered for claiming a revoke at whist. This great and wise king had evidently come to the conclusion that the occasional execution of a courtier *pour encourager les autres* inculcated a moral more

practically than getting wet feet through the disobedience of the waves.

When Napoleon was at Würtemberg, he used to play whist in the evening, but not for money, playing ill, and inattentively. One evening, when the Queen Dowager was playing with him against her husband and his daughter—the Queen of Westphalia, the wife of Jerome—the King stopped Napoleon, who was taking up a trick that belonged to them, saying, 'Sire, on ne joue pas ici en conquérant.'

It must be admitted as a partial excuse for absolutism in such matters, that the spirit of play absorbs or deadens every other feeling. Horace Walpole relates that, on a man falling down in a fit before the bay-window at White's, odds were instantly offered to a large amount against his recovery, and that, on its being proposed to bleed him, the operation was vehemently resisted as being unfair. When Lord Thanet was in the Tower, for the O'Connor riot, three friends—the Duke of Bedford, the Duke de Laval, and Captain Smith—were admitted to play whist with him, and remain till the lock-up hour of eleven. Early in the sitting Captain Smith fell back in a fit of apoplexy, and one of the party rose to call for help. 'Stop,' cried another, 'we shall be turned out if you make a noise; let our friend alone till eleven; we can play dummy, and he will be none the worse, for I can read death in his face.'

The clergy, especially of the West of England, were formerly devoted to whist. About the beginning of the century there was a whist club in a country town of Somersetshire, composed mostly of clergymen, that met every Sunday evening in the back-parlour of a barber. Four of these were

acting as pall-bearers at the funeral of a reverend brother, when a delay occurred from the grave not being ready, or some other cause, and the coffin was set down in the chancel. By way of whiling away the time one of them produced a pack of cards from his pocket, and proposed a rubber.* The rest gladly assented, and they were deep in their game, using the coffin as their table, when the sexton came to announce that the preparations were complete. We have carefully verified the fact that they played long whist, and we suspect whist has been less popular in the Church since the introduction of short, by reason of its inferior gravity. The principle is indicated by Sydney Smith in his qualified defence of angling: 'I give up fly-fishing; it is a light, volatile, dissipated pursuit. But ground-bait, with a good steady float that never bobs without a bite, is an occupation for a bishop, and in no way interferes with sermon-making.'

It was he who, on being nominated to his living by Lord North, preached his first sermon on the text, 'Promotion cometh not from the east, or the west, neither from

the south.' He resided mostly at Bath, on the plea of ill-health, and frequently helped to form the card-party of Mrs. Beadon, the wife of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. 'Mr. Abraham,' said the Bishop one morning, 'it strikes me that if you are well enough to sit up half the night playing whist, you must be well enough to do duty at your living.' 'My lord,' was the reply, 'Mrs. Beadon will tell you that late whist acts as a tonic or restorative to dyspeptic people with weak nerves.' The lady at once made the case her own; and her power over her reverend lord was so well established that the diocese credited her with the entire distribution of his patronage. After his death she became well known to the world of Mayfair by her whist-parties, which rivalled those of Lady Tancred and the old Lady Salisbury who was burnt.

Henri Beyle (Stendhal), musing over an interrupted *liaison* and a lost illusion, exclaims, 'After all, her conduct is rational. She was fond of whist. She is fond of it no longer; so much the worse for me, if I am still fond of whist.' So much the better for him, as he had still an inexhaustible resource; and he would have gained nothing by abandoning it. She was no longer fond of whist, because she was no longer fond of him.

* This story (it is to be hoped apocryphal) was currently told of Mr. Abraham Hayward's uncle, the Rev. Richard Abraham, vicar of Ilminster and Chaffcombe—a man distinguished by learning and wit.

THE OLD BOOKSTALL.

Peter Priggins.

THREE volumes bound into one of portly dimensions, with sixteen full-page illustrations by 'Phiz,' edited by Theodore Hook, Esq., title, *Peter Priggins, the College Scout*. There it lay on the old bookstall, and we picked it up, and were straightway absorbed in its contents. And no wonder; for if even the outside public can take an interest in such books as *The Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green* and *Tom Brown at Oxford*, what must be the joy of an old 'Varsity man' at coming across an ancient chronicle of the scenes among which he himself has lived and moved! It is two-and-forty years since Peter Priggins first made his bow in volume form to the British public, though he had previously in serial shape delighted some thousands of readers of the *New Monthly Magazine*, then under the editorship of the versatile and witty author of *Gilbert Gurney*. And who of the present generation, we should like to know, has ever heard of, much less read, the racy, if disjointed, sketches of Oxford life which are embalmed in the pages of *P. P.*? Let us try to show the reader the sort of thing which our fathers accepted as a humorous, but still tolerably faithful, picture of college life. Let us plunge in *medias res*; as Mr. Priggins's yarns are disjointed and disconnected, it makes very little matter where we begin. We open in the first volume, and find ourselves assisting at a journey over to Henley for the Regatta. 'It was an understood thing throughout the University that any man who chose might go to

Henley, provided he asked leave of the Dean of his college, was back before twelve o'clock, and did not go in a tandem, which was very rigidly and very properly forbidden. Our Dean, you know, is a regular trump, and, though he keeps his teams to their work, never double-thongs them unnecessarily, and is always ready to grant all reasonable indulgences. Upon the present occasion he showed his usual judgment and kindness by bargaining with Costar and the other proprietors for two coaches, to carry all the men who wished to go to Henley and back at a certain moderate sum, thereby insuring comfort and economy too. I' ('tis William Wydeawake who is writing to his friend Bob Rural) 'got leave to go in Kickum's trap, with three other men, and Dick Downe, who was to be "wagoner."' But, to cut a long story short, the Dean would not let either 'wagoner' have more than two horses. There is a verdant gentleman named Solomon Stingo, son of a wealthy brewer, of the party, and a noisy bibulous athlete named Tim Tripes. They drink quarts upon quarts of ale on the way down; get drunk, of course; are upset in trying to race past the mail-coach; see very little of the race (there appears to have been only one, between Oxford and Cambridge); the colours of the former being, as now, dark blue, those of the latter pink. They pull down the figure of the White Hart from above the porch of the inn bearing that name, on the ground that it is positively cruel to keep so noble an animal

in a situation where he can get nothing to eat or drink, and remove the effigy to a neighbouring park. Mr. Tripes has a row, *à la* Sam Weller, with the special constable, whom he thrashes; and the party get back to Oxford in a dilapidated state at 5 A.M. The story of these adventures is told in the racy sporting style which gentlemen affected forty years ago, and is not unamusing, though, of course, the present age would be shocked at the coarse and low tastes of the undergraduates here depicted—tastes which have been humanised by the introduction of ‘sweetness and light’ into college life.

And yet there were aesthetes, or something uncommonly like them, even in those days. Take the following description of Mr. Singleton Slipslop: ‘The set he sought and succeeded with was the idlers—men of fashion—that is, Oxford fashion: beings who never read, because it was a bore; never hunted, because they wanted pluck for it; never rowed, because it spoiled their hands; and never fished, because it spoiled their complexions. Their mornings were passed in dressing, lounging to each other’s rooms, and indulging in talk—it could not be called conversation—about music, of which they did not know a note; green-rooms, the interiors of which they had never seen; and women, whom they only knew by name, though they let fall sundry hints of the expensiveness of their favours. They strolled down the High-street once or twice to show their coats, took a quiet ride or drive, and then dressed for dinner, vying with each other in stocks, waistcoats, and silk stockings; dined quietly, and talked of the merits of their respective tailors and boot-makers, sipped a few glasses of light wine with their dinner,

a little claret afterwards; and after an early cup of coffee, with its accompanying *chasse*, lounged again and talked of the virtues of their tailors and their women, and fondly fancied they had passed a “gentlemanly quiet day.”

Mr. Singleton Slipslop is persuaded by his friend, the Honourable Mr. Spunge, to give a ‘great-go party,’ at which the host and most of the guests are made senselessly drunk, the costly furniture destroyed, and the rooms generally wrecked. Practical jokes of the kind in vogue in those good old days, when the immortal Tom and Jerry knocked down Charleys and revelled in what they were pleased to term ‘life,’ follow, and Mr. Singleton Slipslop is finally dragged from the *débris* of the dessert, one whisker and one eyebrow are cut off, and that gentleman is put to bed with his tiger, who is found in a worse state than his master, in consequence of having emptied the bottoms of some five or six dozen of claret-bottles. A couple of ewers of water are emptied over the bed, and they are left to repose in the deep dreamless sleep of drunkenness. The following morning Mr. Slipslop is discovered nearly naked, thrashing his tiger with a boot-jack—not for getting drunk, but for daring to sleep with him, and for laughing at his absent whisker and eyebrow. Peter Priggins treats us to a good many similar scenes; for this kind of rough horse-play and practical joking, when the charm of drunkenness was added, had an irresistible fascination for high-spirited gentlemen forty years ago, and, indeed, they appear to have had no other sense of humour.

There are glimpses too of school-life which throw the revelations of Dotheboys Hall into the shade. Asked how he manages to keep his boys so remarkably well on

twenty-two pounds per annum, Dr. Doonuffin, of Acorn House, replies: 'Why, as to the provisions, you see, I manage in this way. If Mr. Lyver, the butcher, does not send me pupils enough to cover his bill, I threaten to deal with his rival, Mr. Hart; and I always deal with those tradesmen that send me their sons; if they stick it on, so do I—pens, paper, slates, combs, brushes, knives; and Mrs. Doonuffin's domestic medicines mount up, I can tell you. That's my plan, sir. That's how I manage the vittlin' department. . . . And as to the twenty-two pounds per annum, you see, sir, I circulate these cards in London chiefly, where I have a large connection in the Dissenting interest. Read, and you'll perceive that I say, "Noblemen and gentlemen's sons are splendidly boarded at the low charge of twenty-two guineas per annum, everything included." Now, I had counsel's opinion on that card, and he tells me it can only mean that they are to be fed and lodged for that sum; it says nothing about being *taught*, so I charge extra for that. That's my plan, sir. Four guineas a year—*guineas*, you'll observe; get five per cent by that—for writing, four for ciphering, four for bookkeeping, four for Latin, four for Greek, four for geography and globes, and four more for English literature, including poetry and Bell's letters. Add books, washing, and other little *ancetteras*, and you'll find it is *not* done for twenty-two pounds per annum.'

One of the most amusing sketches of character, which we have been solemnly assured by a contemporaneous Oxonian is *very little exaggerated*, is that of Mr. Exlex, commonly called Legs, the private tutor, who has an original method of coaching idle youngmen,

especially those of a sporting turn. Mr. Legs did not require his pupils to attend at his rooms, but kindly waited on them in their own, and the following is a sketch of his mode of lecturing.

After noticing his pupils by a circular sort of nod, but without speaking, he seizes the nearest tankard. Finding it empty, he examines the other two, and closes the lid of the last with a disgusting look at finding himself balked of his expected draught. He then advances to the open window, and shouts out loudly for Broome, who, knowing what is wanted, hurries to the buttery, brings a two-quart cup of porter, and places it on the lecture-table, with a pewter pot by its side. Mr. Legs fills the pewter, taking care to hold the jug high enough above it to make the liquor froth up, and then blows the top off, as hackney-coachmen and coalheavers are wont to do, and takes a draught very nearly

'As deep as the rolling Zuyder Zee.'

He then sits down and thrusts his long calfless legs, encased in white cord shorts and long drab kerseymere gaiters, under 'the mahogany,' and, placing his white beaver by his side on the ground, exclaims,

'Now, my kiveys, shy up your castors, tie your bird's eye wipes to the stakes, and go to work.'

This classical allusion to the commencement of a prize-fight (for Legs was so fond of pugilistics that he offered to edit and correct the proofs of *Boxiana* for nothing) elicits an exclamation of 'No go, old fellow; we ain't in sufficient training yet,' from his three noble pupils, and a nervous negative shake of the head from Mr. Drinkwater, who perspires too much to speak.

'What! not up to your work,

eh! bellows to mend still? Well, here's one more pull at the "whipcord," and then to show you how to go in and win,' replies Legs, finishing the residue of the porter, and winking at Broome for a relay.

'Now, let's get ready to start the logic coach first; and as there are only three in the team, I must put you along unicorn fashion. Ninny, old fellow, as you don't run in this coach, you may employ yourself in crib-biting or moistening your mouth, ready for a stage in the four-horse Horacemail.'

Ninny did make an attempt to take up logic, but dropped it at the very commencement; for being told there were three *operations* of the mind, it put him so much in mind of physic, which was the only thing to which he had heard the word operate applied, that he nauseated the *ars instrumentalis*, and took to Euclid instead.

While, therefore, Mr. Legs was lecturing on logic he amused himself and annoyed his friends by trying to play 'Polly, put the kettle on,' upon the keyed bugle; but finding it too difficult, he exchanged it for 'In my Cottage,' a much easier air, of which he could play the first three bars very much out of tune.

But for a specimen of Legs' mode of lecturing:

'Well, my pals, where did we pull up last journey?'

'At sillogisms,' replied Rattlebones.

'All right! so we did. Well, a syllogism is this sort of a concern: "All prizefighters are regular bricks; Josh Hudson is a prizefighter." *Ergo*, which means therefore, "Josh is a regular brick;" you won't forget that?'

'Now, you see, the two first propositions are called premises—you know what premises are? No! Why, Costar's stables are his "premises;" you won't forget that?'

Well, the first is called the major—Major Smith, you know, who "posted the tin" for Peter Crawley—you won't forget that? And the other is called the minor. A minor, you know, is a little kivey that ain't of age to touch the dibs—you won't forget that? The last is called the conclusion, the end of the fight, when one of the men can't come to time; you won't forget that?'

Mr. Legs took a little more 'whipcord,' and handed the pewter round to his class. He then continued his lecture very much in the same style, until he had run through the third part of Aldrich, which he did in twenty minutes exactly.

He then commenced his lecture on the Greek books, and as he shone in giving a liberal translation of a battle, I will give one specimen of his method. Any gentleman who has not forgotten his classics, and likes to refer to the original passage, will find it in the seventh book of the *Iliad*, line 244.

'He chaffed indeed, and, shaking his stick, whirled it at Ajax (we'll call him Jack for short—you won't forget that?), but merely hit his carcass-guarder, which was kivered over with the cracklings of seven masculine cudchewers, and formed of eight tin plates; the oaken plant cut slap through six hides, but was jammed like Jackson in No. 7. Next, that son-of-a-heathen-deity, Jack, let fly his walking-stick and hit Priam's cock chickabiddy on his potlid; the well-seasoned ash went clean through his figured waistcoat, and would have given him a belly-go-fuster, but he bobbed and diddled Black Death.'

After the Greek was 'polished off' in another twenty minutes, and the whipcord had been again passed round, the Latin lecture commenced, and the well-known

boat-race of Virgil, lib. v. 139, was thus rendered :

'They sit down upon the thwarts, hold up their oars, and keep a sharp look-out for the signal; their hearts go pit-a-pat from expecting no end of *kudos*. As soon as the trumpeter blows his tin, they stand for no repairs, but away they go. Hurrah! from all hands. In go the oars, and the water hisses round the bows—the Derby pace is nothing to theirs. The men on the banks cheer them on, amidst loud cries of "Go it, my tulips!" Gyas (we'll call him Guy; you won't forget that?) shoots ahead with Cloan—thus (we'll call him "Old Clo'," as the Jews say—you won't forget that?), closes on his counter, the better oar of the two, but pulling a heavier skiff. The Pristis (very like a whale, you know), and the Centaur (part man, part horse, you know—think of a pot of half-and-half, and you won't forget that?) come up bow-and-bow just behind them. The barge, the goal, is in view, Guy leading; when Old Clo' tries the artful dodge, cuts off a point, and gets ahead. Guy begins abusing his cox'en for not keeping closer in-shore, and, the moment he sees Old Clo' ahead of him, hits his steerer a cut on the head, and knocks him into the river; he swims to shore, and in course all the men on the bank laugh at him and his dripping toggery. "Hurrah! go it! well pulled!" The rowers begin to blow—their mouths feel as dry as a dust-heap, and the sweat runs down their noses. One, from steering too close in-shore, runs aground, and hits it up as a bad business. On they go! The race is between Guy and Old Clo'; but the latter, being in best wind, eventually wins, and, amidst the shouts of the men on the barge,

hoists his colours to the head of the flagstaff, and sacks the tin.'

One more extract, and we must bid adieu to Peter. Mr. Byron Scott Montgomery Jilks is sent up to Oxford under the guardianship of his maiden aunt, Miss Violetta Jilks, who has 3000*l.* a year of her own. Mr. Straddle, a fast but impecunious gentleman who has been in the army and is now reading for orders, resolves to recruit his shattered finances by espousing Miss Jilks, who is about double his age. Aided by his friend Blowhard, he gets both young Jilks ('a dreadful spoony,' to use the slang of that day) and the faithful man-servant, Timothy Thornback, into his power, and, by threatening to expose them to Miss Jilks, forces them to assist in his matrimonial scheme. A water-party to Nuneham affords the sought-for opportunity, and this was how the designing fortune-hunter secured his happiness.

Mr. Straddle knew enough of medicine to know that it ought to be 'well shaken when taken,' and struggled to keep possession of his fair patient, in which, after several little 'dont's, pray dont's, how-can-you's,' and other usuals on such occasions, he perfectly succeeded. Miss Vi allowed him to support her in his arms, but kept the green veil down as closely as the green curtain is kept between a comedy and the farce.

Straddle, after keeping the lady and his tongue quiet for some minutes, thought it a seasonable moment to burst out in a fit of ecstasies.

'My dearest Violetta, *this* is what I call happiness, felicity! Here is everything to delight the eye and the heart; the loveliest of her lovely sex in my arms, and the prettiest view possible in my eye! Only observe—to the right, a view of Oxford, that classical

abode of dons and duns; to the left, Abingdon, famed for sacking and smockfrocks; directly opposite us, the park of Radley and its neat farmhouse—the very picture of rural felicity—with a valuable heap of manure within a few yards of its door! O Miss Violetta! as Cicero says in his “Art of Love,”

“How happy could I be with either!” I forget the Latin words; but that’s the sentiment; and a very happy remark it is.

“Very! singularly happy!” said the fair Jilks, sighing profoundly.

“O!” continued Straddle, bending his arm, and nearly squeezing the breath out of Miss Vi’s taper waist, “with such a home as that, and married to the woman of my heart, how happily could I live!”

“Congeniality of souls!” said Miss Vi.

“Make our own butter and cheese,” said Straddle.

“Moonlight walks!” said the lady.

“Kill our own mutton,” said the gentleman.

“Delightful wanderings by the river’s brink every evening!” cried Miss Jilks.

“Fresh eggs and butter every morning!” cried Straddle.

“Be all in all to each other!” said Miss Vi.

“The world forgetting—by the world forgot.”

“Yes,” said Straddle; “and brew our own beer! What a perfect picture of happiness! O my dear Violetta, you must have observed the inward flame that is consuming my vitalities! It cannot have burnt unseen by you; take pity on me, and clap an extinguisher on the combustibles by confessing that the fire has communicated with the premises of your heart, and that you are not insured against its effects in any office.”

“I own I am not insured, Mr. Straddle,” sighed Miss Vi; “but show me the policy—the policy of—”

“D—n the policy, marm!” said Straddle most energetically; “let me seize the premium. Be mine, Violetta; let us join our little all together, and live but for each other, on a plain joint and a pudding every day.”

“Tempting offer!” cried Miss Jilks, wiping away a tear with a handsomely-bordered white cambric; “but I must not—dare not consent. I have, from the purest motives of sisterly affection, devoted myself and my little property to the welfare of my musical, philosophical, and poetical nephew, Byron Scott Montgomery Jilks. For his sake I have refused the plighted vows of the Rev. Messrs. Fribble, Frobble, Frumps, and Dumps, with many other reverends too numerous to mention; and for him I must sacrifice you—even you, my only military, academic passion—O, O, O!”

The artful Straddle, however, overcomes these scruples. He has prepared a little surprise for Miss Jilks. Leading her gently back to the spot on which the party had picnicked, he reveals to her horrified gaze her ‘musical, philosophical, and poetical nephew’ in a disgraceful state of intoxication, and singing a song, the words of which give such a shock to her modesty that she nearly faints. The *ruse* succeeds, and Miss Violetta Jilks becomes in due course Mrs. Straddle.

There are some tragic episodes also in *Peter Priggins*, but they are dull, and, for the most part, do not relate to University life. It is only as a picture, however caricatured, of manners among the graduates and undergraduates of Oxford that the book has any value or interest.

W. D.

ANECDOTE CORNER.

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY J. PALGRAVE SIMPSON—EDWARD DRURY—
KATHARINE GILES—WILLMOTT DIXON—THE ANECDOTE HUNTER—
THE EDITOR—AND OTHERS.

A Wonderful Party at Windsor Castle.

THE following good story comes from a quarter where we are assured 'its correctness can be vouched for.' Many years ago, at the time of a great ceremony, Windsor Castle was honoured with the presence of three sovereigns. After breakfast the three potentates walked and talked on the celebrated 'Slopes,' and were, of course, in 'mufti.' They were delighted with the grounds, and presently entered into conversation with a gardener, who evidently took them for a party of 'gentlemen's gentlemen' out for a stroll. After some little affable talk, he could not resist the query, 'Now, who may *you* gents be?' 'Well,' said the spokesman, 'this gentleman here happens to be the King of Prussia; that one standing by your side is

the Emperor of Austria; and as for myself, I am the Emperor of Russia.' This was carrying the joke too far, thought the gardener. 'I've seen a lot of queer furrin gents here lately, but this beats me;' so he burst out in a rather rude guffaw. 'Well, my friend,' said the Emperor Nicholas, 'you seem amused; perhaps you will tell us who *you* are.' 'O, certainly;' so taking up the skirt of his coat with the action of a great eagle spreading out his wings, and spinning round on his heels, he said, 'If you are all what you say you are—*why, I am the Great Mogul!*' The three Majesties roared with laughter, and, returning to the Castle, told the story at the luncheon-table to the immense amusement of the Queen and Prince Albert.

Who cut Joe Langford's Hair?

ONE of the most inveterate practical jokers of his time was Albert Smith. It must be said, however, that his practical jokes were never executed so as to annoy or mortify any human being. They were generally of a peculiarly quaint and original description. Now, a most genial and amiable member of the Albert Smith band was Joseph Langford. How it came about it would be impossible to say at the present day—the cause has been lost in the mists of time—but the phrase, 'Who cut Joe Langford's hair?' became as com-

mon in men's mouths as 'Does your mother know you're out?' or any similar inanity; and in the bill of the first great amateur pantomime Joseph Langford appeared as 'Mr. Josephs, from Truefitt's Saloon.' There was no great joke in this, it may be said. True; but Albert Smith, when he started on his tour, which was to culminate in the ascent of Mont Blanc, caused a mass of bills to be printed with the strange words, 'Who cut Joe Langford's hair?' These papers he distributed among his friends who were about to travel,

PROVERBS have not always been an unmixed benefit to the world. There are several very mean and malignant proverbs, embodying the wit of one man, and the ill-nature, not the wisdom, of many men. One of the worst of these proverbs is, 'There is no smoke without some fire,' a proverb which has lent its aid to thousands of gross calumnies. Perhaps we might venture to adopt a counteracting proverb, which has at least as much truth, physically and metaphysically, as the foregoing one. It is, 'The less the fire the greater the smoke.'—SIR ARTHUR HELPS (*Brevia*).

reserving to himself one, which, packed in a bottle, he deposited with his own hands on the summit of Mont Blanc, to be found, maybe, by some other enterprising adventurer. Various destinies awaited the other bills; but none created more sensation than those which were posted in different parts of Germany. One of the 'bill-stickers,' at the earliest dawn at Baden-Baden, covered posts and columns, and walls and tree-trunks, with the portentous question, 'Who cut Joe Langford's hair?' In a few hours the whole Baden police was in an

uproar. To them it was very evident that the mysterious words were a rallying signal for the revolutionary and republican party. The panic spread far and wide; printing-presses were searched; domiciliary visits were made; spies were employed on all sides; and professorial philologists were requested to find some analogy between republican symbolism and the awful words, 'Who cut Joe Langford's hair?' There is every reason to believe, however, that they never succeeded.

J. P. S.

'God save the Queen.' a new Version.

APRÓPOS to the opening of the new Law Courts, and the feasting consequent thereon, the present benchers of Lincoln's Inn may be reminded that on the evening of the Queen's coronation, in 1838, the then benchers gave a dinner to the students. One of the students, being called on to sing a solo in the National Anthem, availed himself of the opportunity

to give vent to his dissatisfaction as to the amount of port-wine doled out to them, in the following lines:

'Happy and glorious—
Three half-pints 'mong four of us,
Heaven send no more of us,
God save the Queen.'

This new version was joined in by a full chorus, and the joke much applauded.

Too Strange not to be True.

'THE ruling passion strong in death' is a familiar quotation. How a 'ruling passion' may show itself in all its strength under the strangest and most incongruous circumstances may be exemplified by the following anecdote: Some forty years ago or more a horrible catastrophe took place on the railway

between Versailles and Paris, on the return from a great fête at the former place. The train was crowded with holiday pleasure-seekers. Suddenly the engine broke down, the nearest carriages mounted one on the other 'like living things.' They were newly painted and varnished, and caught fire from

BUT for dreams, that lay mosaic worlds tessellated with flowers and jewels before the blind sleeper, and surround the recumbent living with the figures of the dead in the upright attitude of life, the time would be too long before we are allowed to rejoin our brothers, parents, friends; every year we should become more and more painfully sensible of the desolation made around us by death, if sleep—the ante-chamber of the grave—were not hung by dreams with the busts of those who live in the other world.—THOMAS DE QUINCEY (*Analects from Richter*).

the embers below; in a very short time they became a burning pile. The pleasure train was the scene of terror, agony, and death. A brave young fellow mounted several times on the blazing pyre, at the risk of his life, to rescue some of the passengers from the topmost carriages. Among others, he bore down in his arms a lady dressed in all the exuberance of the fashion of the day, and deposited her in safety. Did she thank the gallant pre-

server of her life? No! Did she faint, or attempt to rush away from the scene of terror? No! The 'ruling passion' was uppermost. With considerable composure she took off her bonnet, which had been slightly crushed, and endeavoured to restore its shape, simply saying, in a tone of tearful indignation, 'A pretty state you've put my dress in, sir! My bonnet is utterly ruined. This comes of travelling with such vile *canaille*!'

J. P. S.

A Hint to Sick Nurses.

LADIES went to the front in great numbers during the Zulu War. With difficulty were many restrained from working at the hospital at Rorke's Drift, before the defence of that place on January 22, 1879. There was opening enough for their energy and patience in the hospitals nearer Pietermaritzburg and in that town. Some of the nurses were wise and some foolish; some few were careless; most were over-anxious that their patients should eat—should rouse themselves when

lethargic, and sleep when inclined to look about and talk; and all were of one mind that the patient should be constantly bathed with water or with scent. 'Poor fellow!' I heard one lady say, while tears of compassion stood in her eyes; 'poor fellow, you are suffering! It will relieve you if I wash your face.' The young fellow said nothing until his nurse had sponged his face; and then he turned to the wall with a groan, and muttered, 'That's the ninth lady as has done it to-day.'

'Sound the Trumpet, Beat the Drum!'

As an epitome of the effects of advertising, what can be better than this excerpt from a modern drama? The particular passage on its first appearance on the stage in 1854 was, I believe, attributed, in theatrical circles, to Charles Ma-

thews: he certainly rattled it off with great gusto. The 'advertisements in the *Times* are the last new map of humanity; where else will you find such a picture of the world, of the ups and downs of existence, the inns and outs of

LIFE REMAINS UNEXPLAINED.—He studies Nature with a careless eye and a benighted mind who does not perceive that the supernatural lies in it and above it. For when all is said that science can teach, and all is done that skill can achieve to cultivate the earth and bring forth its fruits, one gift remains without which everything else is vain—that gift which the Supreme Creator has reserved absolutely to Himself; that gift which man and every living creature can take away and none can restore; that gift without which this earth would 'be no more than the cinder of a planet—the mystery and the miracle of LIFE.—*Edinburgh Review.*

social life? No theories, no paradoxes, nothing but bare facts. Man's hopes, wants, miseries; his schemes of ambition, the dreams he forms, the snares that are laid for him,—all set forth in battle array—column after column. Why, it's the *vade-mecum* of mankind, the pole-star of the world of business, the providence of servants out of place, the guardian

angel of thirsty babies and hungry nurses, the charlatan's trumpet and the tradesman's Parnassus, from whence, mounting his Pegasus at the rate of a shilling a mile, he can see his name, his address, and the super-superlative description of his super-superlative wares wafted down the stream of time to the latest posterity!

Anthony Trollope and the Negro Waiter.

THE late Anthony Trollope, *à propos* of the independent airs and superior manner assumed by negro servants in the West Indies, recounts a little scene he had with a young black servant in an hotel in Jamaica. In England, one is apt to think that an extra shilling will go a long way with boots and chambermaid; but in the West Indies it is necessary that these people be treated with dignity. They like familiarity, but are averse to ridicule.

'Hallo, old fellow, how about that bath?' Mr. Trollope said one morning, to a lad who had been

ordered to see a bath filled for him. He was cleaning boots, and went on as if he had not heard a word.

'I say, how about that bath?' he continued; but the lad did not move a muscle.

'Put down those boots, sir, and go and do as I bid you.'

'Who you call fellor! You speak to a genelman genelmanly, and den he fill de bath.'

'James,' said Trollope, with a polite bow, 'might I trouble you to leave those boots and see the bath filled for me?'

'Ees, sar,' returning the bow; 'genelman go at once.'

Thackeray's Oyster.

WHILST visiting America, Thackeray made particular inquiries concerning American oysters; and at his first Boston dinner some enormous ones were placed before him with a wicked apology for their being so small. He looked at them for a moment, and then

whispered, 'How shall I do it?' He caught up the smallest, opened his mouth wide, and at last accomplished the task. His host asked him how he felt. 'Profoundly grateful,' he gasped out, 'and as if I had swallowed a little baby.'

A HINT FOR THE NEW YEAR.—It is a great preservative to a high standard in taste and achievement, to take every year some one great book as an especial study, not only to be read, but to be conned, studied, brooded over; to go into the country with it, travel with it, be devotedly faithful to it, be without any other book for the time; compel yourself thus to read it again and again. Who can be dull enough to pass long days in the intimate, close, familiar intercourse with some transcendent mind, and not feel the benefit of it when he returns to the common world?—EDWARD BULWER LORD LYTTON (*Caxtoniana*).

A Droll Trial of Memory.

MEMORY was a favourite subject with Macklin. He asserted that, by his system, he could learn anything by rote at once hearing it. This was enough for Foote, who, at the close of the lecture (Macklin was lecturing at the Great Piazza Room, now the Tavistock Hotel), handed up the following sentences to Macklin, desiring that he would be good enough to read them, and afterwards repeat them from memory. Here is the wondrous nonsense:

'So she went into the garden to cut a cabbage-leaf to make an apple-pie, and, at the same time, a great she-bear coming up the street pops its head into the shop. "What! no soap?" So he died,

and she very imprudently married the barber; and there were present the Picinnies and the Joblillies, and the Garyulies and the Grand Panjandrum himself, with the little round button at top; and they all fell to playing the game of catch as catch can, till the gunpowder ran out of the heels of their boots.'

The laugh turned strong against old Macklin; and the laugh has been echoed from the Great Piazza Room by thousands during the century that has elapsed since Foote's drollery put out Macklin's monstrous memory with these straws of ridicule.

An Aquatic Pun.

ONE day, when Colman and his son were walking from Soho-square to the Haymarket, two wittings, Miles Peter Andrews and William Augustus Miles, were coming the contrary way on the opposite side of the street. They had each sent to Colman a dramatic manuscript for the summer theatre; and being

anxious to get the start of each other in the production of their separate works, they both called out, 'Remember, Colman, I am first oar.' 'Humph!' muttered the manager as they passed on, 'they may talk about first oars, but they have not a skull between them.'

The Pre-Scientific Age.

A CONFESSION frankly made by Sir Samuel Garth, physician to George I., and a member of the Kit-Kat Club, has been preserved; perhaps the truth it reveals is as

conspicuous as its humour. Garth, coming to the club one night, declared he must soon be gone, having many patients to attend; but, some good wine being produced, he

O CICERO! my poor thoughtless Cicero! in all your shallow metaphysics not once did you give utterance to such a bounce as when you asserted that never yet did human reason say one thing and Nature say another. On the contrary, every part of Nature—mechanics, dynamics, morals, metaphysics, and even pure mathematics—are continually giving the lie flatly, by their facts and conclusions, to the very necessities and laws of the human understanding. Did the reader ever study the *Antinomies* of Kant? If not, he *shall*, and I am the man that will introduce him to that study. *There* he will have the pleasure of seeing a set of quadrilles

forgot them. Sir Richard Steele was of the party; and, reminding him of the visits he had to pay, Garth immediately pulled out his list, which amounted to fifteen, and said, 'It's no great matter whether I see them to-night or not; for nine

of them have such bad constitutions that all the physicians in the world can't save them; and the other six have such good constitutions that all the physicians in the world can't kill them.'

Foote on Attorneys.

ATTORNEYS have ever been fair game for a joke, and Foote certainly made the most of them. One day, a simple farmer who had just buried a rich relation, an attorney, was complaining of the great expense of a funeral cavalcade in the country. 'Why, do you *bury* your attorneys here?' Foote asked. 'Yes, to be sure we do; how else?' 'O, we never do that in London.' 'No!' said the

other, much surprised; 'how do you manage?' 'Why, when the patient happens to die, we lay him out in a room over-night by himself, lock the door, throw open the sash, and in the morning he is entirely off.' 'Indeed!' said the other, with amazement; 'what becomes of him?' 'Why, that we cannot exactly tell; all we know is *there's a strong smell of brimstone in the room the next morning.*'

A Burning Epigram.

(Attributed to Canning.)

As in India, one day, an Englishman sat,
With a smart native lass, at the window,
'Do *your* widows burn themselves? Pray tell me that,'
Said the pretty inquisitive Hindoo.
'Do they burn? That they do!' the gentleman said,
'With a flame not so easy to smother;
Our widows, the moment one husband is dead,
Immediately burn—for another!'

Cautious Hospitality.

At one of Foote's dinner-parties, when the Drury Lane manager arrived, 'Mr. Garrick's servants' were also announced. 'O, let them wait!' said Foote, in an

undertone to his own servant; adding, loud enough to be generally heard, 'but, James, be sure you lock up the pantry.'

or reels, in which old mother Reason amuses herself by dancing to the right and left two variations of blank contradiction to old mother Truth, both variations being irrefragable, each variation contradicting the other, each contradicting the equatorial reality, and each alike (though past all denial) being a lie. But he need not go to Kant for all this. Let him look as one having eyes for looking, and everywhere the same perplexing phenomena occurs. . . . We all believe in Nature without limit, yet hardly understand a page amongst her innumerable pages.—THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

The Serjeant Bothered.

FACETIOUS Serjeant Wilkins was once retained in a 'horse cause' at York. Being engaged as counsel for the defendant, it was his duty to prove that the horse was sound in wind and limb. The most important witness was an elderly clergyman.

Serjeant Wilkins. 'Well, you're a parson; you don't know much about horses, I suppose?'

Witness. 'Well, yes, I do. My father was a large breeder, and I do know something about them.'

Serjeant (in an off-hand style). 'O, I daresay you think yourself very clever. Can you tell my lud and jury the difference between a horse and a cow?'

Witness. 'Why, there are so many points of difference. One is the same difference as between a bull and a *bully*; the bull has horns and the *bully* has not!'

This was said with a polite and significant bow to the Serjeant, who sat down forthwith.

A Scene-Shifter's Ideal 'Hamlet.'

THE following anecdote is related of Bannister, the famous actor of the last century: As he was standing one night unobserved by the wings of Drury Lane Theatre, a small coterie of scene-shifters were discussing the performers of *Hamlet*. One admired Henderson,

another Kemble, and each commented on his favourite. At last one of them said, 'You may talk of Henderson and Kemble, but Bannister's *Hamlet* for me; for he's always done twenty minutes sooner than anybody else!'

A Whimsical Reproof.

SWIFT had some whimsical contrivances to punish his servants for disobedience of orders. The hiring of his maidservants he left to his housekeeper, and, that form being over, he acquainted them that he had but two commands to give them—one, to *shut the door whenever they came into a room*; the other, to *shut the door after them whenever they went out of a room*. One of these maidservants

requested permission of the Dean to go to her sister's wedding, which was to take place at about ten miles from Dublin. Swift not only consented, but lent the servant one of his horses, and directed that a manservant should ride before her. The maid, in her joy at this favour, forgot to shut the door when she left the Dean's room. In about a quarter of an hour after she had left the house,

WORKING THE PUMPS.—When the vessel has sprung a leak, and the sailors are engaged in working the pumps, the ship cannot make much way over the waters. To keep afloat is the great thing. If the haven shall be at last reached, yet the advance of the voyage must be retarded. Often when we are expecting activity from an individual, such as would be like the happy progress of a voyaging ship, we find on inquiry *that he is working the pumps*. The tempest has been upon him, and the waters have broken in through leaks of disappointment, sickness, and bereavement. It is much if he can but keep afloat; and if he can advance some little, that is his utmost. The time is one of anxiety, but of labour—strenuous labour, too.—T. T. LYNCH (*Memorials of Theophilus Trinal, Student*).

the Dean ordered a servant to saddle another horse, to overtake the maid and her escort, and oblige them to return immediately. This was done, and the girl came into the Dean's presence with the most mortified countenance, and

begged to know his honour's commands. 'Only to shut the door after you,' was the reply. But not to carry the punishment too far, he then permitted the maid to resume her journey.

Garrick and Foote.

ONE night Garrick and Foote were about to leave the Bedford together, when the latter, on paying their bill, dropped a guinea; and not finding it at once, said, 'Where on earth can it be gone

to?' 'Gone to the devil, I think,' rejoined Garrick, who had assisted in the search. 'Well said, David,' was Foote's reply; 'let you alone for making a guinea go farther than anybody else.'

A Merry Jest about Merchant Taylors.

FOOTE having dined at Merchant Taylors' Hall, he was so well pleased with the entertainment that he sat till most of the company had left the table. At length rising, he said, 'Gentlemen, I wish you both a very good-night.' 'Both?'

exclaimed one of the company; 'why, you must be drunk, Foote; here are twenty of us.' 'I have been counting you, and there are just eighteen; and as nine tailors make a man, I am right. I wish you both a very good-night.'

A Famous Classic at Fault.

THAT Porson, the famous Greek scholar, was not so good an authority in the matter of spirits as of the ancient classic mss. is evident from the following anecdote. Spending the evening, on one occasion, with his friend Hoppner the painter, he began to feel extremely thirsty. Mrs.

Hoppner happened to be away on a visit to a friend, and had taken with her the key of the wine-chest, so that the artist was unable to offer wine to his friend. At last Porson's thirst becoming unbearable, he said, 'I know, my friend, that Mrs. Hoppner keeps a nice bottle for private use in her cham-

HUMAN ASSOCIATIONS.—Put the fine dresses and jewelled girdles into the best group you can; paint them with all Veronese's skill. Will they satisfy you? Not so. As long as they owe their due services and subjection—while their folds are formed by the motion of men, and their lustre adorns the nobleness of men—so long the lustre and the folds are lovely. But cast them from the human limbs, golden circlet and silken tissue are withered; the dead leaves of autumn are more precious than they. This is just as true, but in a far deeper sense, of the weaving of the natural robe of man's soul. Fragrant tissue of flowers, golden circlets of clouds, are only fair when they meet the fondness of human thoughts, and glorify human visions of heaven.—JOHN RUSKIN.

ber. Try, prythee, if you cannot put your hand upon it.' His host assured him that the idea was chimerical, and that his wife had nothing of the sort in her room; but Porson insisting, he at last, with some surprise, went up-stairs and made a search. Eventually a small bottle was found under the bed and brought down-stairs. It was almost full; but Porson finished its contents, declaring that he had never tasted better.

The following day Hoppner took his wife to task, in the first place, for leaving him without anything to drink; and in the second place, for her concealment of her secret store, adding that Porson had drunk the whole of her private bottle which he had found in her room. 'Drunk the whole of that bottle!' cried she; 'good gracious, that was the spirits of wine for the lamp!'

Frightened by Dentists.

I WAS once governess in a nobleman's family. I was well treated and well trusted there. So much so, that I was given the charge of Lord Dickens when at fourteen he was forced (through over-eating of sugar-plums) to pay a visit to the dentist. We started for London by the 9.30 train, and I took the greatest care of the poor victim. I told him anecdotes of dentists; tried to show him that, in spite of their apparent cruelty, they were the best of men; that no class of men excelled theirs in humanity. I described several adventures I had gone through in dentists' surgeries. I amused him with an account of my visit to a dentist abroad. My brother, about Lord Dickens's age, had accompanied me to the operator's house, seen me

take chloroform, and held my head until it was torn from his grasp by a tug that bore me to the ground. The fumes of chloroform left me; I recovered consciousness; found myself unseated, and heard my brother saying, 'Jove, it was like digging for potatoes, sir.' 'How beastly!' exclaimed Lord Dickens. 'My gums were certainly cut to pieces, and the tooth was not removed,' I answered musingly. And then came a hideous scream from the engine-driver, and we were launched into Merstham tunnel. I am a creature of nerves; I have taken medicines, I have travelled, tried sea-bathing, tepid baths, mud and ozone baths. All in vain; a creature of nerves I still remain. The darkness, the atmosphere, the mystery of the tunnel was almost

NOTHING is more moving to man than the spectacle of reconciliation; our weaknesses are thus indemnified, and we are not too costly—being the price we pay for the hour of forgiveness; and the archangel, who has never felt anger, has reason to envy the man who subdues it. When thou forgivest, the man who has pierced thy heart stands to thee in the relation of the sea-worm that perforates the shell of the mussel, which straightway closes the wound with a pearl.—THOMAS DE QUINCEY (*Analects from Richter*).

too much for me that day: what, then, do you imagine were my feelings when, on our bursting into daylight again, I found myself alone! For some minutes I was paralysed, and then I sprang up and attempted to attract attention. Attract it I did, although not as I could have wished. There was no alarm-bell in the carriage, and I had requested that no one might be allowed to join my charge and me. This had created some amusement in the frivolous minds of people who were requested to move on to the next carriage. The fashion for young men to unite themselves in matrimony with their elders was just then coming in, and the rejected passengers glanced comically at the word 'engaged' upon our door. When, therefore, I began to attempt to attract attention, the neighbours determined to make believe that a love quarrel was going on between poor lost Lord Dickens and myself. Their 'chaff' would have been laughable to me at any other time, but at that moment of awful suspense I heeded it not. Where, O where, was my boy? I looked at the aperture for the lamp (that was out, of course); its hole was too small

for the young lord's body. There was nothing but the window for him, and, as the carriage did not contain him—as I gazed only on vacancy—he must have thrown himself out during our tunnel time. Alas, alas! At last I burst into tears, and at that moment we stopped at the station. I called aloud in agony, and the carriage was soon besieged by people of all classes. 'Now then, now then!' called out a guard, shouldering his way through them all; and having reached me he added, 'And, now then, ma'am! what in the name of Fortune is the matter with you?' I told him as calmly as I could; and, after my recital, he pointed grimly to the under part of the compartment next to me. 'If so be you've really lost your son, ma'am, what does that carrot-head there mean?' O, most wonderful! from under the seat a golden curl appearing betrayed the hiding-place of my sweet spoiled boy! He came out at the guard's request, and then exclaimed, 'I'm awful sorry, you know, govey; but you did curdle my blood so with those adventures of yours in the dentists' shops.'

K. G.

Origin of Common Expressions.

THE origin of the term *sub rosa* dates from the ancient custom of suspending a large rose, or bouquet of roses, from the middle of the card-room ceiling, just as we, on a particular occasion, hang a bunch

of mistletoe. It was noticed, in course of time, that card-players—especially those of more mature age—generally kept their racy remarks, scandal, gossip, and what not, for the card-party; and many an im-

NIGHT.—The earth is every day overspread with the veil of night for the same reason as the cages of birds are darkened, viz., that we may the more easily apprehend the higher harmonies of thought in the hush and quiet of darkness. Thoughts, which day turns into smoke and mist, stand about us in the night as lights and flames, even as the column which fluctuates above the crater of Vesuvius in the daytime appears a pillar of cloud, but by night a pillar of fire.—
THOMAS DE QUINCEY (*Analects from Richter*).

proper story or disgraceful piece of backbiting was gleefully repeated over the nightly rubber, of course always in strict confidence. As this always took place beneath the suspended bouquet, the words *sub rosa* came to mean anything *entre nous*—which was to go no farther; and this meaning has been retained until the present day.

The saying, 'Those who live in glass houses must not throw stones,' dates back to a time at which London was full of Scotchmen, immediately after the union between England and Scotland. The then Duke of Buckingham, who was no friend to the Scotch, devised various expedients to vex

them, and, amongst others, organised nightly parties to smash their windows. One of these Mohawk escapades being traced to his lordship, a Scotch party, by way of revenge, smashed all the windows of the Duke's residence in Martin's Fields. This mansion had so many windows—in the days when daylight was a luxury—that it was known as the 'Glass House;' and, on these being broken, the Duke appealed to the King, who, with a touch of native wit, at once replied, 'Steenie, Steenie, those wha live in glass houses should be carefu' how they fling stanes;' and the apophthegm has, as we know, been preserved to this generation.

Lord Chesterfield's Sayings.

A NOBLEMAN of questionable veracity told Lord Chesterfield one day that he had drunk six bottles of champagne. 'That is more than I can swallow,' remarked his lordship.

Chesterfield, speaking of himself and Lord Trawley, when both were very old and infirm, said, 'The fact is, Trawley and I have been dead these two years, but we don't choose to have it known.'

George Colman's Sayings.

JEKYLL, calling on Colman, noticed a squirrel in one of the usual round cages. 'Ah, poor devil!' was the pitying remark, 'he's going the Home Circuit.'

'O, no,' said Colman; 'my good sir, we only want to get a stave out of you.'

—*—*—
A young person, being hardly pressed to sing in a company where Colman formed one of the party, solemnly assured them that he could not sing; and at last said rather hastily, 'that they wished to make a butt of him.'

—*—*—
Colman and Bannister were dining one day with Lord Erskine, the ex-Chancellor, who, in the course of conversation on rural affairs, boasted that he kept on his pasture-land nearly a thousand sheep. 'I perceive, then,' said Colman, 'your lordship has still an eye to the Woolsack.'

YOU doubt the efficacy of prayer! Pause and reflect, bold but candid inquirer into the laws of that guide you call Nature. If there were no efficacy in prayer—if prayer were as mere an illusion of superstitious phantasy as aught against which your reason now struggles—do you think that Nature herself would have made it amongst the most common and facile of all her dictates? Do you believe that if there really did not exist that tie between man and his Maker—that link

George Selwyn's Sayings.

THE beautiful Lady Coventry was one day exhibiting to George Selwyn a splendid new dress covered with round silver spangles, and inquired how he liked her taste. 'Why,' said he, 'you will be change for a guinea.'

Horace Walpole was on one occasion observing that the same indecision and want of system in politics had existed during Queen Anne's time as now existed in George III's. 'But there is nothing new under the sun,' he added. 'No,' said George Selwyn, 'nor under the grandson.'

George Selwyn's morbid passion for public executions and similar horrors became notorious. He paid a visit to Lord Holland while the latter was on his death-bed. When his lordship was told that Mr. Selwyn had called, he said, 'Should he come again please to show him up. If I am alive I

shall be happy to see him; if I am dead, he will be happy to see me.'

Some ladies were bantering Selwyn on his want of feeling in going to see Lord Lovat's head cut off. 'Why,' said he, 'I made amends by going to the undertaker's to see it sewn on again.'

'How does your horse answer?' inquired the Duke of Cumberland of George Selwyn. 'I really don't know,' George replied; 'I have never asked him a question.'

George Selwyn was very much annoyed one 1st of May by chimney-sweepers, who were clamorously surrounding and persecuting him. In short, they would not let him go till they had forced money from him. At length he made them a low bow, and said: 'Gentlemen, I have often heard of the majesty of the people: I presume your highnesses are in court mourning.'

A Poetical Despatch.

IN matters of commerce the fault of the Dutch
Is giving too little and asking too much.
With equal advantage the French are content,
So we'll clap on Dutch bottoms a twenty per cent—
Twenty per cent;
Twenty per cent;
*Nous frapperons Falck** with a twenty per cent.

RT. HON. GEORGE CANNING.

* Mr. Falck, the Dutch Minister, having, in 1826, made a proposition by which a considerable advantage would have accrued to Holland, this despatch was actually sent to our ambassador at the Hague, and soon afterwards an Order in Council put into effect the intention announced therein.

between life here and life hereafter which is found in what we call Soul, alone—that wherever you look through the universe you would behold a child at prayer? Nature inculcates nothing that is superfluous. Nature does not impel the leviathan or the lion, the eagle or the moth, to pray; she impels only man. Why? Because man only has Soul, and Soul seeks to commune with the Everlasting, as a fountain struggles up to its source.—EDWARD BULWER LORD LYTTON.

Swiftiana.

ONE argument to prove that the common relations of ghosts and spectres are commonly false may be drawn from the opinion held that spirits are never seen by more than one person at a time; that is to say, it seldom happens to above more than one person in a company to be possessed with any high degree of spleen or melancholy.

As universal a practice as lying is, and as easy a one as it seems, I do not remember to have heard three good lies in all my conversation, even from those who were most celebrated in that faculty.

How is it possible to expect that mankind will take advice, when they will not so much as take warning?

I forget whether advice be among the bad things which Ariosto says are to be found in the moon: that and time ought to have been there.

It is pleasant to observe how free the present age is in laying taxes on the next: 'Future ages shall talk of this; this shall be famous to all posterity;' whereas their time and thoughts will be taken up about present things, as ours are now.

It is a miserable thing to live in suspense; it is the spider of life.

The stoical scheme of supplying our wants by lopping off our desires is like cutting off our feet when we want shoes.

Satire is reckoned the easiest of all wit; but I take it to be otherwise in very bad times; for it is as hard to satirise well a man of distinguished vices as to praise well a man of distinguished virtues. It is easy enough to do either to people of moderate characters.

Anthony Henley's farmer, dying of an asthma, said, 'Well, if I can get this breath once out, I will take care it shall never get in again.'

If a man makes me keep my distance, my comfort is he keeps his at the same time.

Apollo was held the god of physic and sender of diseases. Both were originally the same trade, and still continue.

A person was asked at Court what he thought of an ambassador and his train, who were all embroidery and lace, full of bows, cringes, and gestures. He said it was Solomon's importation—gold and apes.

The common fluency of speech in many men and most women is owing to a scarcity of matter and a scarcity of words; for whoever is a master of language, and has a

AN OLD STORY WITH MANY MODERN APPLICATIONS.—The retort was too obvious to escape anybody, and for me it threw itself into the form of that pleasant story reported from the life of Pyrrhus the Epirot, viz. that one day, upon a friend, requesting to know what ulterior purpose the King might mask under his expedition to Sicily, 'Why, after *that* is finished,' replied the King, 'I mean to administer a little correction (very much wanted) to certain parts of Italy, and particularly to that nest of rascals in Latium.' 'And then——' said the friend. 'And then,' said Pyrrhus, 'next we go for Macedon; and after that job's jobbed, next, of course, for Greece.' 'Which done——' said the friend. 'Which done,' interrupted the King, 'as done it shall be, then we're off to tickle the Egyptians.' 'Whom having tickled,' pursued the

mind full of ideas, will be apt, in speaking, to hesitate in the choice of both; whereas common speakers have only one set of ideas and one set of words to clothe them in, and these are always at the mouth; as people come faster out of a church when it is almost empty than when a crowd is at the door.

Old men and comets have been revered for the same reason—their long beards, and pretences to foretell events.

It is with religion as with paternal affection—some profligate wretches may forget it, and some, through perverse thinking, may not see any reason for it; but the bulk of mankind will love their children.

It is with men as with beauties: if they pass the flower they lie neglected for ever.

Courtiers resemble gamblers: the latter finding new arts unknown to the older.

Dr. Young relates: 'I'll send you my bill of fare,' said Lord B., when trying to persuade Dr. Swift to dine with him. 'Send me your bill of company,' was Swift's answer to him.

We were to do more business after dinner; but after dinner is after dinner: an old saying and a true—much drinking, little thinking.

Swift, in the *Examiner*, defends aristocracy on its true grounds, but with a fierceness quite equal to his brilliant wit. 'A pearl,' says he, writing of the positions from which great men have come, 'holds its value though it be found on a dunghill; only that is not the most probable place to look for it.'

'That was excellently observed,' say I, when I read a passage in an author where his opinion agrees with mine. When we differ, there I pronounce him to be mistaken.

Men of great parts are often unfortunate in the management of public business, because they are apt to go out of the common road by the quickness of their imagination. This Swift once said to Lord Bolingbroke, and desired that he would observe that the clerk in his office used a sort of ivory knife—with a blunt edge to divide a sheet of paper, which never failed to cut it even, only requiring a steady hand; whereas if they should use a sharp penknife, the sharpness would make it go often out of the crease, and disfigure the paper.

friend, 'then we——' 'Tickle the Persians,' said the King. 'But after that is done,' urged the obstinate friend, 'whither next?' 'Why, really, man, it's hard to say—you give no one time to breathe; but we'll consider the case as soon as we come to Persia; and until we've settled it we can crown ourselves with roses, and pass the time pleasantly enough over the best wine to be found in Ecbatana.' 'That's a very just idea,' replied the friend; 'but, with submission, it strikes me that we might do *that* just now, and at the beginning of all these tedious wars, instead of waiting for their end.' 'Bless me!' said Pyrrhus, 'if ever I thought of *that* before! Why, man, you're a conjurer; you've discovered a mine of happiness. So, here, boy, bring us roses and plenty of Cretan wine!' —THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

Variorum.

HENRY FLOOD, in the course of some debate, inadvertently referred to Grattan as his 'honourable friend.' Grattan sprang upon his legs and indignantly exclaimed, 'Whom does the honourable gentleman call his friend? Not *me*, surely. I'd spit on him in a desert.'

During the war panic that seized us near the beginning of the century, a certain Corporation offered to raise a volunteer corps, on the condition of receiving an assurance from Mr. Pitt that they should not have to leave the country and serve abroad. The Minister accepted the offer; and in reply to the request wrote, 'I will engage that they shall not be called upon to leave the country—except in case of invasion.'

Lord Palmerston, during his last attack of the gout, exclaimed playfully to his medical adviser, 'Die, my dear doctor? That's the *last* thing I think of doing.'

One warm summer night, at the Haymarket, Foote had put up Garrick's *Lying Valet*, when the little manager called in at the green-room, and with self-satisfac-

tion said, 'Well, Sam, so you are taking up, I see, with *my* farces, after all.' 'Why, yes, David,' was Foote's reply; 'what could I do better? I must have some ventilator this intolerable hot weather.'

Lord Chesterfield, when Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, being asked one day whom he thought the greatest man in the country, replied, 'The last man who has arrived from England, be he who he may.'

A story is told of Swift's commanding 'Sweetheart,' as he called his cookmaid Mary, to carry down a joint of meat, and do it *less*; and on her alleging that was impossible, his grave request that when in future she chose to commit a fault, he hoped she would choose one which might be mended. Upon another occasion, hearing one of his servants, in the act of undressing, express a luxurious wish that he could ride to bed, the Dean summoned the man up-stairs, commanded him to fetch a horse from the paddock and prepare him for a journey, and when the poor fellow reported that the horse was ready, 'Mount him then, sirrah,' said the Dean, 'and ride to bed.'

A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR.

WHAT awful gifts of rapture or despair
Hold thy closed hands, O thou new year, for me !
'Twixt far-off days and this thy January
What passages shall be of love, of prayer !
The heights of life where I would walk are fair ;
But in the valley, where the damp mists be,
I have walked ever on ; O, let me see
Those longed-for heights, respire their vital air !
New tests of pain I dare not deprecate,
Hardly dare pray for any dear delights,
Seeing all days are vanquished by dark nights.
Only, I pray, whatever be my fate,
Thy days may witness me at last, though late,
If not *upon*, yet *making for* the heights.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.





DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

See p. 217.

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THREE WIZARDS AND A WITCH.

BY MRS. J. H. RIDDELL, AUTHOR OF 'THE SENIOR PARTNER,'
'GEORGE GEITH OF FEN COURT,' ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. GAYRE'S BROTHER-IN-LAW.

WALKING leisurely towards that 'crib' hard by the Regent's Park which Sir Geoffrey Chelston had appropriated as coolly as the cuckoo does the hedge-sparrow's nest, Mr. Gayre employed his mind in dissecting the motives which were taking him to North Bank. Love for his brother-in-law could certainly not be reckoned amongst them. In every capacity of life—as man, as gentleman, as baronet, as husband, father, friend, relative—Sir Geoffrey was distasteful to him. Only for one thing had Mr. Gayre ever felt grateful to the well-born sinner. Sir Geoffrey's life had been so openly shameful that it was vain for him ever to think of suing for a divorce. Lady Chelston, spite of the irreparable error of her life, was Lady Chelston still—living abroad in the strictest retirement on a pension duly paid to her every half-year by the solicitors of Messrs. Gayre and Co. The scandal, now an old story, was confined to the knowledge of a very few persons; it had never been a nine days' wonder or a case for the courts. Sir Geoffrey, as a rule, held his tongue about the woman

who had made such a wreck of her life, and society did not trouble itself to ask whether the disreputable Baronet were married or a widower. It knew in either state he was not fit to associate with. Voluntarily he had placed himself outside the pale as well of intimacy as curiosity, and no one thought of being inquisitive concerning him. To the Gayres the Chelston connection had ever been a source of loss, annoyance, and disgrace, and it was not love for his brother-in-law that could be one of the reasons now drawing Mr. Gayre to the unaccustomed pastures of the Regent's Park.

Given to merciless and sarcastic analysis of the motives of others, no one could accuse Mr. Gayre of undue lenity towards his own. It was not as a censor he regarded the foibles of his fellows; on the contrary, his great failing happened to be that he looked on life—unconsciously, perhaps—as a by-stander at a game. He knew all the moves and tricks and subterfuges, and he watched the play with a cynical interest which even extended to the working of his own heart.

Surprised perhaps at finding a human weakness in that great

citadel, he would trace its birth and career with a curious and intelligent attention. As some persons have a mania for the study of bodily disease, his craze was to watch the manifestation of mental sin and folly. Making due allowance for original temperament, it might be said his nature had grown up malformed by reason of two accidents in early life. There was good in him and there was bad, and he would have assured any questioner solemnly there was neither bad nor good, that he was an utter negative; that he had no pleasure except in watching a woman spin a web, and then invite some fly who thought himself very clever to walk across and see what a beautiful web it was, or, greater ecstasy still, watch the process by which one big thief was robbed by a bigger. Finding so little to do in Lombard-street he had turned his attention to these matters; and having at length decided to go to North Bank, it was most unlikely he would arrive there till he had ascertained why he had decided to call.

'Given,' he thought, 'ten parts, there is one to form some faint conjecture how my precious brother-in-law, without a penny of visible income, without property, character, or friends, manages to shuffle along. Shall we say one for that, or is it too much? We'll say one. Two—because I really can look no longer at my sister's child making such an exhibition of herself, and feel constrained to stretch out a hand which may save her or—may not. Then there is Sudlow worrying me to death to introduce him. We'll put a half for that—three and a half out of ten; how much is that per cent, in City phrase? Never mind; it leaves six and a half for the girl with the brown eyes, and

the wonderful hair, and the pure complexion; that is a large proportion. Nicholas, my friend, you had better mind what you're at. It's a case, I'm afraid, of either kill or cure; you'll either find the first half-dozen words you hear her speak disenchant you totally, or else—you've met your fate. But I haven't met her yet,' he added more cheerfully—'only seen her once with the breadth of the Row between us—and for that matter, I may never meet her anywhere, or see her again.'

Having arrived at which conclusion, he turned down North Bank, and sought the residence of his kinsman.

Every one acquainted with North Bank knows exactly the sort of house, secluded inside high walls, which obtains on the preferable or canal side of the way; the mysterious postern-gate that, being opened, discloses two yards of gravelled path, a few evergreens, some trellis-work, and a peep of greensward and water beyond; houses small, it maybe, but capable of being in their style made anything—which, indeed, they too often are—save respectable.

Mr. Gayre smiled grimly as he recognised the type of dwelling, and asked the irreproachable Lavender, who, in striped waistcoat, without his coat, and in what he modestly called his 'small clothes,' answered the bell,

'Is Sir Geoffrey in?'

Lavender did not know in the least who the new-comer might be; but he looked at the erect carriage, the trim cut-away coat, not half an inch too wide, not a quarter of an inch too small; at the cropped head, the military moustache, the quiet tie, the trousers and waistcoat *en suite*, the command in the cold gray eye, and decided,

'Here at last is somebody decent come to see master.'

'Well, sir,' he answered, shocked at once at his *déshabille* and the consciousness there was no one in to do the honours, 'Sir Geoffrey is in, but he's not up. He did not come home till late last night, and he has not yet rung his bell.'

Which was, indeed, within the letter of truth; for Sir Geoffrey had not come home till so late last night that the water-carts were abroad when he made his appearance, and when he did come was so drunk Lavender had no expectation of hearing his bell till late in the afternoon.

'I ought to have taken that first check,' said Mr. Gayre to himself in the days to come; but he did not, and went on, 'Is Miss Chelston at home?'

'Yes, sir,' answered Lavender; 'but—'

'If you take in my card, she will see me,' said Mr. Gayre; 'I am her uncle.'

'I knew it,' affirmed Lavender subsequently; 'I knew it was somebody decent come to the house at last.'

'If you'll walk in, sir, please,' he observed to Mr. Gayre; and that gentleman was consequently shown into the morning-room of young Mr. Moreby's lady-love—that lady-love whose doings, and more especially whose drawings, had so distracted the soul of Mrs. Moreby, widow.

'Humph!' reflected Mr. Gayre, looking round the apartment, which was about eleven feet by seven; 'a fool and his money are soon parted.'

'If you will be pleased to walk this way, sir,' repeated Lavender, who, having seized the opportunity of donning a coat, now felt himself quite a master of the ceremonies; then, flinging wide

the drawing-room door, he announced 'Mr. Gayre.'

There was something so ludicrous about the whole business that Mr. Gayre would have laughed in his sleeve, had he not felt it was bad form on his niece's part to wait till he had crossed the small hall and entered the charming apartment overlooking the canal ere coming to make his acquaintance.

'She is not a duchess,' he thought; 'and, considering where I find her, she might be a little more natural. However—'

'And so at last I see my niece,' he said aloud; and then Lavender discreetly closed the door, and Mr. Gayre found himself alone with a most lovely young woman, who, in the shyest manner, gave him her hand and timidly held up her face, so that he could kiss her if he liked.

Which he did, though with no very great good-will; and yet there were ten thousand young men in London, to say the least of it, who would have availed themselves of such a chance with effusion.

Well, well, thus runs the world away, and perhaps it is better that it does.

'And so at last I see my niece,' Mr. Gayre repeated, which, for so usually ready an individual, seemed a needless waste of words. 'Let me look at you in the light;' and, framing her cheeks between his hands, he drew her towards one of the windows. 'If you are only as good as you are pretty,' he said, releasing her.

'O, I don't think, uncle, I am so very bad,' she answered, with delightful confusion.

'How far are you off your copy-book days?' asked Mr. Gayre.

'What a funny question! Nine or ten, I suppose.'

'Then you remember self-praise is no commendation.'

'O, how dreadful, uncle! I did not mean to praise myself. O no! I'm very, very sure of that, because—'

'What is your name, my dear?' he interrupted.

'Marguerite,' she answered.

'And your mother was called Margaret. Well, perhaps better so.'

They talked together in the house for a while; then they walked out on the sharply sloping lawn for a time longer, she with a dainty parasol over her wealth of dark-brown hair, he bare-headed. Then they returned to the drawing-room, and after she had drawn the blinds half down they exhausted, as it seemed to Mr. Gayre, all topics of ordinary interest, and he was just racking his brain to think what he should say to her next, when the door opened and Sir Geoffrey Chelston—clean, clothed, and in his right mind, and on his very, very best behaviour—entered the apartment.

'I take this very kind of you, Gayre,' he said—'deucedly kind indeed,' he added. And soothed and cheered by these amenities, Mr. Gayre resumed his seat.

By dint of long endeavours to keep his hat on three hairs, Sir Geoffrey had contracted a habit of shaking his head, which caused many persons when first introduced to imagine (erroneously) he was afflicted with palsy or some other disease, which had somewhat impaired both his bodily and mental powers.

Under this impression they were wont to challenge him to play billiards and other games, to take his bets, and all that sort of thing, and come signally to grief.

If subsequently they departed cursing him, surely Sir Geoffrey was not to blame. It was only a habit; but some men's habits

are useful, and his proved eminently so.

'This is your first introduction to your niece, isn't it?' observed Sir Geoffrey, after a few interesting remarks had been made about the weather and the locality.

'Well, and what do you think of her?' he went on, with a knowing twitch of his head, when his brother-in-law had signified acquiescence with the previous proposition. 'She's not so bad, is she?'

'I have already taken the liberty of remarking to her that if she is only as good as she is pretty—'

'Ay, that's the thing,' interrupted Sir Geoffrey; as though he himself were such a paragon of virtue, the mere idea of naughtiness proved repugnant to his moral sense; 'that's what I used to say to her and Susan, "Beauty's only skin deep," "Handsome is as handsome does." Haven't I told you so a hundred times over, Peggy, when you were going to fly at Susan and scratch the ten commandments over her face because I said she was prettier than you?'

'I feel no doubt you have,' answered Peggy, with a tender smile, which was somewhat belied by a look in her eyes that made Mr. Gayre fancy that in her heart she desired nothing better at the moment than to grave some lines on Sir Geoffrey's sallow cheek.

'Who was Susan?' asked the banker. 'I always thought you had never but the one daughter.'

'That's right enough—no more I had. Who was Susan? why, the merriest little lass in the whole world, and fond of me, too—far fonder than my own child ever was. Lord! it seems no longer ago than yesterday when she used to come running across the lawn, and say to me, with both her little arms round my knees,

"Dive me a wide, papa Geoff;" didn't she, Peg?

"I have no doubt she did," Peg replied, with another smile.

"Doubt!" repeated Sir Geoffrey; "why, you know she did, just as well as you know what a nice passion you used to get into when anybody said she had a better complexion than you."

"I was only a child, papa," reminded Miss Chelston.

"Ay, only a child," agreed the Baronet, with another indescribable twitch; "and now you're a young woman, there's no need for you to be jealous of anybody, though I say it. And that brings us back to what your uncle remarked, that he hoped you were as good as you were pretty."

"Well, you are a strange pair," considered Mr. Gayre, contemplating parent and child with admiring attention.

"And this Miss Susan," he suggested—"is she not pretty now?"

"O yes, she is," said Sir Geoffrey, "but she's not so handsome as my girl there. Those very fair children somehow don't look so well at twenty as at six. I can't tell why. Susan's good, though, that she is."

Having dealt his daughter which backhanded compliment, and leaving both his hearers to take whatever meaning they pleased out of it, the Baronet proposed an adjournment to the next apartment.

"You must have a glass of claret, Gayre, after your walk," he declared, with the hospitable warmth of a man who gets his claret for nothing. Mr. Gayre did not want the wine, but he accepted the proffered civility, as he wished to speak to his brother-in-law alone.

"Now look here," exclaimed Sir Geoffrey, piloting the way to the dining-room, "take some champagne, do—claret's an un-English, ungenial sort of tippie,

except when one can't get anything else. I have some first-rate champagne, as you'll say when you taste it, and I'm going to have some myself. Champagne and soda-water is the best "pick up" I know, and, to tell you the truth, I feel I need a pick up of some sort. We did keep the ball moving last night. I'd have been right enough if I'd never gone to bed; but now my head seems going round and round, like a coach-wheel. You'll have champagne? That's right, with just a dash of brandy in it. I always advise the brandy; champagne's cold with-out, and, some people find, absolutely unwholesome too."

Mr. Gayre said he would venture upon the champagne minus the brandy; and this point being amicably settled, Sir Geoffrey, to show he was not recommending what he feared to practise, followed up the first prescription he ordered for himself with that he advised for his brother-in-law; after which proceeding, regarded by Mr. Gayre with curiosity, not to say awe, the Baronet stated he felt much better—"fit for anything, in fact."

"You've dropped into a nice place here," said the banker, as he and Sir Geoffrey sauntered down the garden. "You might be a hundred miles in the country."

"Yes, it's quiet enough in all conscience," was the reply; "fact is, it's too quiet and out-of-the-way for me. Still, we can't have everything; and the little cottage costs me nothing. Moreby—capital young fellow—lent it to me."

"So I heard," remarked Mr. Gayre; and he might have added he had also heard how Mr. Moreby came to lend it.

"His mother took him abroad all in a hurry, and not an hour too soon," explained the new oc-

cupier, in the tone of a man who is paid for denouncing vice at the rate of about a guinea a word. 'He was going a pace! Why, just look how this house is furnished! I only wish I had the money it must have cost him.'

Really, to hear Sir Geoffrey talk, any one might have imagined he had never possessed a spare sixpence or been given a solitary chance in his life.

'It was too good an opportunity to let slip,' he went on, finding his brother-in-law made no comment on the desire last expressed, 'for I had not a roof to put my head under. Don't think that would have troubled me, though; I can live anywhere and on anything. I'd as soon sleep on the floor as not; and nobody ever heard me object to gin when I could not get Cliquot;' and having, in the contemplation of his own self-denial, almost dropped his hat, Sir Geoffrey shook it on again with the conscious rectitude of a person earning two pounds per week by hard labour, and contriving to save fifteen shillings out of it.

'But it was my daughter,' he said, after a slight pause. 'I couldn't let the girl remain without a shelter, however willing I might be to make shift myself.'

'It was a difficult position, certainly,' observed Mr. Gayre, feeling this concession could not compromise him.

'Difficult! I believe you! Give you my word, I could not sleep of nights wondering what on earth I was to do with her;' a statement which, as Sir Geoffrey very rarely slept of nights, usually soundly reposing by day, meant less than it might otherwise have done.

'You called her Marguerite, she tells me.'

'Faith, that I did not, or any-

body else, so far as I know, except herself. Her right name is Margaret, of course, but she thinks Marguerite fits her better, somehow; and if it pleases her, I am sure it may please me.'

'Does she know many people in London?' asked Mr. Gayre.

'Many!—not a soul. I don't know what to do with her, or how to set about getting her acquaintances. Time slips away; and I can't tell how long I shall be able to keep this house. It's confoundedly awkward altogether, for something ought to be doing.'

'You want to get her married, I suppose?'

'If I can,' answered Sir Geoffrey, breaking off a bay-leaf and eating it with great apparent relish.

'You'll not compass your object, I'm afraid, by sending her out in the Park.'

'Have you seen her there, then?' said Sir Geoffrey, reddening under his brother-in-law's steady gaze.

'Yes; that is how I knew you were in town. You had better let her abandon equestrian exercise. In the first place, she can't ride.'

'No, indeed, she can't,' groaned Sir Geoffrey; 'if she could she'd have been worth a fortune, in a way of speaking. But she'll never be of any use to me—not the least in the world; she hasn't a notion of making herself useful. Why, with her appearance—'

'You will have to be careful what you are about,' interposed Mr. Gayre, with decision. 'You must get some lady of position to introduce her.'

'I don't know who that lady is to be, then,' retorted Sir Geoffrey. 'If you can find her, I shall feel mightily obliged to you. It's all very easy to talk, but I can tell you it's not so easy to do.

Why, there's my own second cousin on the mother's side, Lady Digley. When I was a boy the old people thought it would be a fine thing to make up a match between us; and she was brought down to the Pleasaunce on view. But I couldn't stand her nose—too much of the Coriolanus, Roman-senator-business, about that nose. However, as I was saying, I wrote to her, telling her my daughter was in London, and mentioning the girl's good looks, and so on, and in plain words asking would she take her up.'

'Well?' inquired Mr. Gayre.

'The old hag sent an answer by return. Lady Digley presented her compliments, and the rest of it, and Lady Digley regretted to say circumstances over which she had no control compelled her to decline the honour of making the acquaintance of Miss Chelston. Damn her!' added Sir Geoffrey, with great fervour, referring to Lady Digley, and not to his own daughter.

Mr. Gayre made no remark for a few minutes, but stood looking thoughtfully down upon the canal.

The situation undoubtedly was awkward; and it did not seem as if any fresh revelation was likely to improve its aspect.

'Why did you bring her to town at all at present?' he asked, after a pause, during which Sir Geoffrey, looking as unlike a dove as possible, plucked another leaf.

'Why?' repeated that gentleman; 'because I had no other place to leave her. It seems to me, Gayre, you don't at all understand how I am situated.'

'I think I do,' was the reply; 'but had you no friends near your old place with whom the girl could have stayed for a while?'

'Dunce a friend,' answered Sir

Geoffrey. 'Believe me, my dear fellow, when a man has got to the bottom of the hill, those who were civil to him at the top find it convenient to forget the fact of his existence.'

'But your daughter,' urged Mr. Gayre; 'young people form acquaintances for themselves, and, as a rule, the young are not mercenary. Was there no single door held wide to welcome my niece?'

'Not one.'

'But think—for example, that Susan you were speaking of just now, did she hang back?'

'Susan Drummond? No, she did not hang back; but she had nothing in her power. You see, about the time things got to the worst with us her uncle died, and she had to clear out. She wrote me as nice a letter as you could wish to read. She was always fond of me, poor Susan! I know she thought a deal of me,' added the Baronet almost sentimentally.

Mr. Gayre looked askance at Sir Geoffrey, and wondered what in the world any girl or woman could see to admire, whether personally or mentally, in the disreputable jockey and battered *roué*.

'There is no accounting for the caprices of the sex,' he decided, and reverted to the original question.

'It will save us both a great deal of time if I am quite plain with you,' he said, almost smiling as he spoke in Sir Geoffrey's slowly-lengthening face. 'I don't mean you to dip deeper into my pocket than you have done; but as regards my niece, I should like her, at all events, to have a chance of making something better of life than an utter failure. For this reason I will see whether, amongst my own connection, I cannot find some one

to chaperone her; you must do your part, however. Keep her in the background till she can come to the front properly. Couldn't you, meantime, get some lady to reside in the house, as governess or companion, eh?

'Well, I'm afraid not,' answered Sir Geoffrey. 'We've tried that sort of thing before, and though I am sure I was always most courteous and careful, still, "once give a dog a bad name," you know; the respectable ones wouldn't stop, and—'

Mr. Gayre laughed outright. 'We need scarcely pursue the other side of the question;' a decision which, on the whole, proved rather a relief to the Baronet.

'If your daughter had even some young friend stopping with her for a time,' suggested Mr. Gayre. 'Where is that Miss Drummond? wouldn't she come?'

'I daresay she would; she spent more than half her time at Chelston Pleasaunce. Yes, she'd come fast enough; but then, you see, I don't know where she is.'

'But your daughter does, no doubt.'

Sir Geoffrey shook his head dubiously. 'I don't think so,' he said.

'Ask her,' advised Mr. Gayre; 'there she is.'

And, indeed, there Miss Chelston was, framed within an open window, to which her father at once advanced.

'Where is Susan Drummond now, do you know?' he asked; and Mr. Gayre, standing a step or two behind, watched her face as she answered,

'Susan Drummond, papa? I haven't an idea. She was in Ireland, staying with some people who live near Killarney.'

'But you've some address where you can write to her?'

Miss Chelston lifted her beautiful eyes and looked at her father, as she answered, in the accents of utter truthfulness, 'She did tell me where an aunt lived who would always forward on any letters; but I have mislaid the direction, and quite forget what it was.'

'After that' thought Mr. Gayre; and his meditations, as he strolled through Regent's Park homeward, were of a more unpleasant character than those with which he had amused himself a couple of hours previously.

CHAPTER V.

A POSSIBLE SAMARITAN.

It is one thing to ask friends to 'take up' a girl, and quite another to get them to do it.

This was Mr. Gayre's experience, at all events. He went very heartily into the business, in the first instance full of faith and hope, and later on with a species of desperation.

'Margaret's child?' repeated his brother, now a great dignitary of the Church, with a town house in Onslow-square, Rector of Little Fisherton, Canon of Worcester Cathedral, Chaplain to the Queen, and Heaven only knows what besides—'Margaret's child! Ask Matilda to invite her to this house and introduce her to our friends! My dear Nicholas, the thing is an utter impossibility. I would not for any consideration prefer such a petition to my wife.'

'Why not?' demanded Mr. Gayre.

'It is a matter into which I really must decline entering. Your own usually excellent sense should tell you it is out of the question persons in our position could for a moment entertain the

idea of bringing forward the child of our unfortunate sister, and the daughter of that most disreputable reprobate Sir Geoffrey Chelston. Our dear Fanny and sweet Julia are not aware even of the existence of such a cousin. And you say she is in London; what a dreadful misfortune!

Every one was in the same story; the words might be different, but the sense proved the same. Sir Geoffrey rich might have managed to slip his daughter through a camel's eye into the social heaven presided over by Mrs. Grundy; but Sir Geoffrey without an acre of land, with no balance at his banker's, living on his wits, regarded by gentlemen of his own order as a very leper, had not a chance.

'I reckoned without my host,' said Mr. Gayre to the Baronet *Cagot*. 'It is not to be done.'

'I told you so at the beginning,' answered Sir Geoffrey, who, if he had learned nothing else from experience, could not help knowing the sort of reception any creature belonging to him was likely to meet with from the fashionable world. 'You meant it all kindly, Gayre, I know; but there is no use in trying to kick against the pricks. You had better stop in your own comfortable home, and not trouble about us out-at-elbow folks up here. If Margaret and I cannot swim together—and it seems we can neither of us do that—we must sink;' and the Baronet, as he concluded, regarded his brother-in-law furtively out of the corner of one knowing eye, for he was wondering what on earth this latest benefactor meant to do, if not for him, for his daughter.

'Confound him!' considered Sir Geoffrey, 'why does he not adopt her? If he took her to Wimpole-street, and got some dashing widow to matronise her,

and hinted he meant to give her a handsome *dot*, he might pick and choose a husband for her. Ah, if I had only in my power what he has in his, I'd soon bring the old dowagers who have sons about me, begging and praying for my daughter's company! But he's only a duffer, that's what he is, spite of his military achievements and the old bank at his back. Lord, how lucky some men are!' and Sir Geoffrey, with his hat more on one side of his head than ever, wended his virtuous way to pluck the latest pigeon good fortune had made him acquainted with.

'If Gayre were in my shoes he'd starve, that's what Gayre would do,' he decided; and he walked along thinking what a clever fellow Sir Geoffrey Chelston was, and what a fool Nicholas Gayre. 'Still, I should like to know his notion about Peggy, because he has some notion, I'll swear.'

Sir Geoffrey would have been very wrong in swearing anything of the kind. Mr. Gayre had no fixed notion whatever concerning the divine Marguerite. He wanted her to marry well; but he failed exactly to see how, weighted as she was, she could marry at all.

'I should say,' was the result of Mr. Gayre's mental reflections, 'that she is as awkward a girl to strive and get "settled" as ever I saw in my life. India would be the place for her; and yet I don't know. She would get a husband on the voyage out, most likely; but then it is not every husband that might suit her. If she could have been properly brought out in London—but I see that is not to be thought of.'

There was one way this might have been accomplished—one way which would have suited Sir Geoffrey and his niece extremely well; but it is only justice to that ex-

cellent sense Canon Gayre, in his suave voice and best pastoral manner, declared Nicholas possessed, to say the idea of adopting his niece had never once crossed the banker's mind.

Even had he taken to her, which indeed was not the case, he would have thought a long time ere installing himself as parent to another man's child, and that man Geoffrey Chelston. About Nicholas Gayre there was nothing much stronger than his strong common sense—that sense which induced him, when he went down to war amongst the City Philistines, to drop the title of Colonel, and sink into simple Mr. Gayre.

'I've seen,' he said, 'vans going about the City with "Dr. Hercules Smith, blood-manure manufacturer," and "Sir Reginald Jones & Co., patent stench-trap makers," painted upon them. Thank you, nothing of that sort for me. I have no fancy to figure as Colonel Gayre, banker, like the fellow in the Volunteers who puts on his business-card, "Major Robinson, waste-paper dealer."'

Upon the whole, excessive virtue has a great deal to answer for. Its action, as regarded Margaret Chelston, had certainly the effect of making Mr. Gayre wonder whether, after all, there might not be some merit in vice.

'I need no man to remind me'—thus ran his thoughts—'what a black, disreputable, sinful old sheep Chelston is; but, hang it! surely if John's religion has any reality, that ought to make him more anxious to help the girl. She is not answerable for her father's faults; and after all, she is Margaret's child.'

During the course of the stormy correspondence which ensued on the Marguerite question between the Canon and his brother, the

banker made some unpleasant remarks, which the Rev. John took as personal injuries, concerning the priest and the Levite who passed by on the other side, and left to a Samaritan their proper work of tending the man who had fallen among thieves.

Nicholas, being at the time not merely very angry, and greatly disappointed, but possessed by a gibing devil, which at times 'rent,' and caused him to 'foam at the mouth,' ransacked the New and the Old Testament for texts concerning the pride and worldliness of priests and Levites, to hurl at his brother's head. The Canon simply 'ducked,' and declined the contest; he would not argue, he said, with a man in so 'unfit' a state of mind. He promised to remember him in prayer. He alluded to St. Paul's oft-quoted statement concerning evil communications corrupting good manners, and mildly hinted he feared communication with that evil thing Sir Geoffrey Chelston was corrupting the small amount of morality Nicholas had brought with him out of the army.

In good truth, John Gayre was as furious as a Christian and a canon of Worcester might be. In orders he had done remarkably well; yet, since the death of his eldest brother, he had often felt that, but for orders, he might have done much better. Further, he never really loved Nicholas; and Nicholas, on his part, had not fraternised with 'canoness' Gayre and the minor canonesses Gayre as he ought to have done. When dear Julia published a song for the benefit of the Lambeth Shoe and Stocking Society, Nicholas suggested, first, it was brought out less to benefit bare-footed Lambeth than as a bid for a future primacy; and then offered to buy up the edition and sell it for waste paper, on

condition she forswore musical composition ever after; whilst he criticised so mercilessly some 'angelic' hymns written by our sweet Fanny, that the Canon's favourite child, feeling all moderate Church views vanity, and meeting with a sympathetic 'priest,' was for some time in danger of going over to the Ritualists, which would indeed have proved a most grievous slap in the face for that party from whose hands Canon Gayre hoped some day to receive a mitre.

Altogether, a great division seemed imminent in the Gayre camp one morning, in the fine June following that late May, when Mr. Sudlow, leaning over the rails in Hyde Park, admired rank and beauty as, embodied in Miss Chelston, it rode timidly along the Row.

Mr. Gayre, banker, walking Cityward, had left an extremely nasty letter behind him in Wimpole-street, emanating from Mr. Gayre, Canon. It went into money matters, always a fatal and terrible subject to select for family correspondence. It expressed quite plainly grievances which had never before been more than hinted at. It referred to one topic, regarding which Nicholas desired forgetfulness; and it said a man who voluntarily permitted himself to become entangled for a second time with Sir Geoffrey Chelston could only be considered a fit candidate for the nearest lunatic asylum.

'Moderate,' proceeded Canon Gayre, 'as you must be too well aware, my means are, in comparison with what I expected, and had a right to expect, they would prove, I should not have hesitated joining you in settling a small annuity on the daughter of our unfortunate and erring sister; but to be exposed to your insolence because I refuse to disgrace

my cloth by taking, as an inmate of my house and the associate of my wife and daughters, the child of a blackleg and a woman who forgot what was due to her name and her sex, is more almost than I can bear. Happily, however, I am not vindictive, and I shall earnestly pray you may never hereafter find some of the texts of that Scripture you now so painfully wrest, applicable to yourself.—Faithfully your sorrowing brother.'

There was so much 'excellent sense,' common sense, worldly sense, plain useful sense, in this epistle, that it stung Nicholas to the quick. So far as money matters went, he felt himself blameless. He knew, if no one else did, his father had made a fair will, and left John as much or more in hard cash as the business would stand. He remembered the annuity paid to his sister came out of his own pocket; he was aware that, had he not given up a profession to which he was devoted, John's large income would have been considerably smaller; he understood perfectly what his brother wanted was a share in the bank, if not for himself, at least for one son-in-law, or perhaps two sons-in-law. It was not as regarding £ s. d. the letter irritated, though it hurt; no arrow the Canon shot really found its mark, save that which criticised the prudence of his conduct regarding Margaret No. 2.

He was well aware he had acted on an impulse he was powerless to control, and Mr. Nicholas Gayre did not like to act on impulse.

Canon Gayre himself could not have looked with more disfavour on such a freak than the banker of Lombard-street.

'However,' thought that gentleman, 'I have gone in for my

niece, and I shall try if I cannot "see her through." The materials are not promising; nevertheless, I think something may be done. The world is not bounded by my own social horizon, and it is inhabited by a good many other people besides Canon John and Lady Digley—only, who is going to play the part of Good Samaritan?

A pertinent question, truly. Mr. Gayre had gone the round of his own friends, and met with 'No' for answer in every tone and every form of words a negation could be uttered. It was clearly of no use expecting help from Sir Geoffrey; and so far the young lady herself appeared either unable or unwilling to mention the name of any person with whom she could take up her abode, or who might be induced to enter the gates at North Bank as an honoured guest.

'Still,' considered Mr. Gayre, 'the thing is to be done, and I must do it, if only to take the canoness "down a peg;"' inspired by which idea, the banker mended his pace, and, walking briskly Cityward, reached Lombard-street just as the clock of St. Mary Woolnoth chimed half-past eleven.

On the top step of the three which at Gayres' afforded departing customers that number of chances for breaking a limb the banker beheld an apparition which filled him with ire. It took the bodily form of Lavender, but behind it Mr. Gayre knew stood the prompting figure of Sir Geoffrey. Now, he had told that worthy in plain and unmistakable language he must not ask him for money or appear at the bank. 'Here is the first breach of our convention,' he muttered, acknowledging with but scant courtesy Lavender's pleased and respectful greeting,

and receiving the letter written by the Baronet's own hand in a somewhat ungracious manner.

'I took it to Wimpole-street, sir,' explained the man, 'but you had just left; and as Sir Geoffrey he wanted an answer very particular, I got on a bus, and came here as fast as I could.'

'Don't stand there,' answered Mr. Gayre testily. 'I can't, attend to you for a few minutes—wait inside till I am at leisure.' And having thus successfully snubbed poor Lavender, and permitted the bank porter, and consequently every clerk in the establishment, to see there was 'something up with the governor,' he walked into his own room, still holding Sir Geoffrey's envelope unopened in his hand.

There was a pile of letters awaiting his attention, and to these—laying aside the Baronet's epistle, as though some serpent might be expected to crawl out of it—he first addressed himself.

Almost at the bottom of the heap he came upon a tinted envelope, with an imposing coat-of-arms wrought in silver for seal. The banker smiled as he drew out the enclosure, and read:

'Brunswick-square, Wednesday.

'Dear Mr. Gayre,—*As usual*, I am in trouble, and also as usual I ask you to advise and help me.

'My poor little Ida is still ailing, and Dr. Tenby says I must get her out of town. He does not want her to go far away, as it will be necessary for him to see her frequently. He recommends me to take a house in the country, and yet near London—for, sweet darling, she is so delicate, she requires every possible *home* comfort. There is a place to let near Chislehurst (furnished) which, from the description I have received of it, would, I

think, suit her *exactly*; but, alas, I am chained to the sofa with a sprained ankle. There is no hope of my being able to walk for weeks; and the agent writes that the house is sure to be snapped up immediately. What am I to do? Have you any elderly and reliable clerk who would go down and bring back a faithful report of "The Warren"?

'Of course, whatever expenses might be incurred I should be only too happy to pay. I am always encroaching on your kindness; but I know you will forgive me. Is not the weather lovely now? It does seem so *dreadful* to be pent indoors, with the sun shining and the birds singing.—Yours very sincerely,

'ELIZA JUBBINS.'

'Eliza Jubbins will be the Good Samaritan,' said Mr. Gayre aloud in triumph. 'I wonder how I could be so stupid as never even to think of her;' and, seizing a pen, he wrote back:

'Dear Mrs. Jubbins,—I will go to Chislehurst for you with much pleasure. Tell me to whom I must apply for an order. When I call with a full report I shall hope to find you and Ida much better.—Yours faithfully,

'NICHOLAS GAYRE.'

'Now to see what Chelston wants. I wish he had not selected this particular time for beginning to worry me;' and, seizing the Baronet's epistle, he tore it open with the air of a man determined to face the worst.

And behold, after all, there was nothing so very terrible—only a crossed cheque, with a good signature attached, which Sir Geoffrey wanted his brother-in-law to cash.

'For I have no banking ac-

count,' he explained; 'and if I took it to any of the tradespeople I should perhaps be expected to leave most part of the change behind me.'

Mr. Gayre pressed his bell.

'Spicer,' he said, 'send in the person who has been waiting for me, and tell Hartlet I want him.'

Doubtful, perhaps, of the reception he might meet with, Lavender hung beside the door till the banker, with all his usual affable frankness when addressing those inferior to himself restored, bade him come forward; and while Hartlet was absent getting fifteen ten-pound notes, the precise form Sir Geoffrey had requested the change might take, asked how Miss Chelston was, and remarked on the fineness of the weather, and altogether relieved and satisfied the man.

'O, by the bye,' said Mr. Gayre at last, 'do you remember one day when you were in the Row seeing a gentleman's horse shy at a stone roller? It was a hunter—bay, with black legs.'

'Yes, sir, well; he was riding with Miss Drummond. I don't know if you noticed her horse—a very handsome animal too.'

'It was the bay took my fancy,' answered Mr. Gayre. 'Do you happen to know the rider's name?'

'No, sir, I never saw him before; but he was a free-spoken sort of gentleman, not long back from the Colonies, as he gave me to understand, and, if I remember right, he said he and Miss Susan had ridden across from a place I think he called Enfield Highway. I don't know if I am quite right in the name.'

'There is an Enfield Highway,' remarked Mr. Gayre; and then he put up the notes in an envelope, which he handed to Lavender, smiling to think how far matters seemed to have advanced

in the course of a single morning.

'I'll see, my dear niece,' he decided, 'whether I cannot ascertain Miss Drummond's address, which you say you have forgotten.'

CHAPTER VI.

ELIZA JUBBINS.

WHEN Colonel Gayre decided to exchange his sword for a pen, he took up his residence in Brunswick-square with old Mr. Gayre, who had long determined not to remove from that central and convenient locality till the time came for him to be carried to the Gayre vault in Highgate Cemetery.

The house was situated on the north, or quietest, side of the square. No fault could be found with the number or size of the rooms, the healthfulness of the situation, or the general air of comfort pervading the whole dwelling. Nevertheless, Mrs. John Gayre and her husband both professed themselves surprised at their father electing to stop in a house where he had known so much trouble. His wife and son both died in it; and there, also, he faced that bitter sorrow concerning his daughter.

John urged the old man to make his home with them, or, at least, to move further westward, and 'away from all the sad memories which clustered around Brunswick-square,' but his parent asked in return, 'Where could I go that it would be possible for me to forget my dead?'

Those were the days ere it had become a fixed belief of the English nation that happiness and health are to be compassed only by eternal change of residence; but yet John Gayre felt it very

unreasonable for any one to refuse the delights of constant clerical companionship and those intellectual pleasures only to be found in the more fashionable parts of London. He and his wife became more exercised in their minds than ever as to whether the sole-surviving member of the Gayres meant to take a certain 'designing' manager into partnership. Long previously Mrs. John had settled future banking arrangements entirely to her own satisfaction. Her brother was to put in a certain amount of money; and then his son would marry dear Julia or Fanny, and so 'preserve' Gayres for the family. John had been 'pushed forward' in the Church in a truly 'miraculous manner,' but his wife wished him to be pushed forward a great deal more.

A most worldly and ambitious woman, she was constantly trying to manage an old gentleman who erred, perhaps, on the side of fancying that all his life he had contrived to manage exceedingly well for himself. Mr. Gayre, however, utterly declined to be managed. He got very tired, he said, of general society, and, resisting all attempts to induce him to change his abode, he 'shut himself up,' to quote Mrs. John Gayre's own words, 'to question the justice of the Almighty.' But in this statement she was quite wrong. Mr. Gayre was a much truer Christian than his daughter-in-law had ever been. He had lost, but he did not sorrow as one who has no hope; disgrace had touched him, but he went among his fellow-men and transacted his business notwithstanding. As for other matters, he still maintained his custom of giving four formal dinner-parties each year; and if the guests who accepted his invitations seemed to Mrs. John

'dreadful people,' they suited the banker a vast deal better than the folks he met when seduced to an 'at home' in Onslow-square.

They might not know much about Court or the 'dear Queen,' or dukes and duchesses, but some of them were acquainted with Baring and Rothschild; and if they could not talk about the latest pieces of fashionable scandal, they were aware how stocks stood, and shook their heads mournfully over Jones's huge failure, and told how Smith had netted fifty thousand at one transaction. Further, at his dinner-table he delighted to see the clergyman from the church situate in Regent-square, just at the back of his own house, and any officer or civilian to whom Nicholas asked him to show a little attention.

There was plenty to eat in Brunswick-square, and of the best quality, Mr. Gayre's spreads differing in this respect from the Onslow-square parties, where, as once was said, a fellow never got anything except 'water-ices and iced water.'

Mrs. John Gayre had, indeed, reduced gentility to a science. Her 'social gatherings' had become so eminently genteel, no one who could help it went to them twice. Mr. Gayre had reason when he objected to drive all that distance and stand 'in a crowd,' with nobody he knew near him, and get nothing in the way of food save a morsel of sandwich and a wine-glassful of claret-cup. What he enjoyed, and what really kept him in Brunswick-square, was the companionship of a few old friends, who liked their rubber and a bit of supper to follow, and something hot and comfortable in the way of punch as a genial good-night; all lights out by half-past eleven, and the whole

household warmly asleep before twelve. Insomnia was not a thing Mr. Gayre knew much about, and he did not want to know about it.

'The modern manner of living,' he was wont to declare, 'brings all sorts of evil in its train,' a sentiment his old friends in Bedford and Russell Squares and Gower and Guildford Streets were quite willing to echo so long as old-fashioned customs presented so pleasant an aspect as they did in the hospitable banker's house.

Amongst the friends who for many a long year after Mrs. Gayre's death had helped to soothe the widower's loneliness by taking a hand at a rubber was a certain Mr. Jubbins, who, though not old in comparison with most of the worthies wont to assemble in the comfortable drawing-room, was certainly by no means youthful. His father had been a well-to-do oil-merchant in a very large way of business; and Mr. Samuel Jubbins, devoting his attention to the same line of money-making, contrived, through some process, either chanced upon by himself or devised by some other person, literally to turn oil into gold. Give him the dirtiest, thickest-looking stuff imaginable, and it came forth from his warehouse clear and beautiful, a thing to be admired, an article to be paid for.

This wonderful process seemed also to have produced a similar effect on Mr. Jubbins. All the oil of his nature was good and pleasant and genial. No better, or honest, or kinder man ever cut for deal. He was good to the poor swarming in the courts off Gray's Inn-lane, and other neighbourhoods adjacent to his house; and he bore the tyranny and the tantrums of an elderly maiden sister, whose bitter tongue was

the terror of Bloomsbury, with a patience which should have secured him canonisation.

Amongst his many friends was a solicitor, who lived in great style at a corner house in Bedford-square, having offices in Bedford-row. This solicitor owned one child, a daughter; and Mr. Jubbins had dandled this young lady when she was a baby, and won her childish heart with presents of fruit and cakes and confectionery. Her name was Eliza Higgs; and it may safely be said no greater hoyden ever existed as a girl.

When they were all little folks together, she and the smaller Gayres were close friends; and on wet days they were wont to play at battledore and shuttlecock in the wide hall of the Bedford-square house, and drive imaginary coaches and tandems up and down stairs, to the distraction of their elders.

Eliza Higgs was the youngest and worst of the trio. She had a hard, well-filled-out, good-natured, lively face; wonderful brown hair; as stout and straight a pair of legs as ever gladdened a parent's heart; activity which seemed simply inexhaustible; and a capacity for getting into mischief which could only be regarded as miraculous. She was in love with Nicholas Gayre, and used to kiss him in a manner the boy resented with many shoves and angry remonstrances; but, on the whole, he liked Eliza very much indeed, and preferred her companionship, when any deed of daring was in question, to his more timid sister.

When Nicholas Gayre returned home for good he found the bouncing Eliza, Mrs. Jubbins, and the mother of several tallow-faced and delicate children. Mr. Higgs' affairs had arrived at such a state of entanglement that he tried to

hang himself in consequence. Being cut down just in time, Mr. Jubbins stepped forward to the rescue, and proved himself the splendid fellow everybody had always thought him. He took the Higgs helm, arranged with Higgs' creditors, found money for the Higgs establishment; and finally, one Sunday morning, as he was escorting Eliza back from St. Pancras Church, asked her if she would marry him.

Had Miss Jubbins known she had kept her brother single till he was fifty years old, only in order that he might propose for her god-daughter, she must have risen from the grave, where the long-suffering man followed her only a year previously; but she did not know or hear Miss Higgs' murmured 'Yes.'

The young lady had been warned by her mamma that a proposal was imminent, and told on no account to indulge in any little affectations or pretences.

'Our position is too serious, my dear, to be trifled with,' said the astute lady; and accordingly Eliza—who could not forget the shock her papa had given them all, or the mere thread which stood between her and beggary, or, to do her justice, Mr. Jubbins' kindness—gave her lover to understand she would marry him with great pleasure.

When the happy man reached Bedford-square, he had one of those kisses Nicholas Gayre once received with such disfavour.

'God bless you, dear,' he said; and went away because he wanted to be alone with his bliss.

That same afternoon, Mrs. Higgs, who was an eminently practical person, with no tendency to let the grass grow under her feet, called on Mr. Gayre, and had a long chat with that gentleman.

'I left Lizzie crying,' she said, with a cheerful countenance, after she had told her good news, 'and you'd never guess why.'

'Perhaps,' suggested the banker—who thought the whole arrangement most sensible and proper, and 'evinced a right feeling'—'because he is nearly thirty years older than herself.'

'O dear, no,' answered Mrs. Higgs; 'she does not mind that at all.'

'Had she any other lover?'

'Not that she cared for.'

'Was she fond of any one who was not fond of her?'

'Good gracious! what are you thinking of? Certainly not, Mr. Gayre.'

'Then, as I have exhausted all my guesses, will you tell me why your daughter was crying when you left her?'

'Because her name would be Jubbins. "Higgs," she said, "was bad enough, but only to think of Jubbins!"'

'Ah, those novels, those novels!' exclaimed Mr. Gayre; and then, with a glad heart, he offered Mrs. Higgs a glass of wine, for the banker was a very kindly man, and sincerely lamented the misfortunes of his friends, when they did not ask him for any money to tide them over their troubles; and he thought reverses in a certain rank of life were most lamentable, and that if any one member of a family could help the remainder to regain their former position, it was the duty of that individual to make even a great sacrifice in order to avert the social scandal of wealth being reduced to poverty.

In the matter of Eliza Higgs, as wife, mother, and widow she behaved precisely with that admirable feeling and excellent sense Mr. Gayre expected. She could scarcely have been human, and failed to

prove grateful to the man who thought her perfection, and deemed nothing in the world money could purchase, or love think of, too good for his young and handsome wife.

No happier couple could have been found in the whole of Bloomsbury, where Mrs. Jubbins was pointed out as an example to refractory misses, and a rebuke to skittish matrons.

She learnt to play whist almost as well as her husband, and Mr. Gayre often crossed the square in order to play a rubber, and spend a quiet evening in the Jubbins house, which was ordered on much the same lines as found favour on the north side.

Mr. Jubbins, making money a vast deal more rapidly than Mr. Gayre, spent but a small proportion of his income, and invested the rest in good undertakings. He looked up to the banker as his superior in age, rank, and wealth, and Mr. Gayre liked to be so looked up to; therefore the intercourse between the two houses grew closer and closer.

Things were in this state when Nicholas Gayre commenced, under his father's tutelage, to learn the knowledge and mystery of banking; and though he never associated freely with, or took kindly to, the Bloomsbury connection, it was impossible for him to avoid seeing a great deal of it.

'Where could you find kinder or more excellent people?' asked the old man, who saw, or fancied he saw, a sign of the cloven foot—the West-end mania—in his son.

'All your friends, sir,' answered Mr. Gayre jun., 'do, indeed, appear to be most kind and excellent persons.' ('At the same time,' he added mentally, 'it is quite possible to see too much of them.')

He made no mention, however,

of this feeling to his father. Long habits of military discipline, and sincere affection and profound respect for a parent who had always acted kindly and liberally towards him, tied the ex-officer's tongue concerning questions far more vexed and important than the choice of acquaintances or the selection of guests.

He did not abandon his own circle, but he concealed the weary impatience he felt of the Bloomsbury dinner-parties and social evenings. The Israelites never could have loathed the wholesome manna and the too plentiful quails to the same extent that Nicholas Gayre learned to hate whisk and port-wine and whitebait and lark-pudding and City talk; but in a most difficult position he behaved himself remarkably well, and though his father's friends never, perhaps, felt themselves quite at ease when he was of the company, they liked to talk about young Gayre, who, in spite of his having 'been at Balaclava, you know, and all through the Mutiny, had given up his profession and his brilliant prospects to please his father, and was settling down in Lombard-street as if he had been sitting behind a desk all his life, like one of our own sons, sir.'

Years had come and years had gone since the days when Nicholas and his sister and Eliza Higgs romped through the large house in Bedford-square; but the first thing Colonel Gayre thought of, when he saw Mrs. Jubbins in the bosom of her family, was concerning those sounding smacks she had been in the habit of bestowing so lovingly and lavishly upon him. He had forgotten all about them and her, till his father piloted him across Brunswick-square, and took him up into the great drawing-room, the windows of which almost faced those of

Mr. Gayre's own house, and said proudly, 'I have brought an old friend to see you, Mrs. Jubbins. I do not suppose you remember my son Nicholas.'

Did she not, poor soul? Had not a wandering thought gone forth to him across the seas even on her wedding-day? though Heaven knows there was not a taint of disloyalty in the thought to the best husband that ever lived.

'I am so glad you have come back to us, Colonel Gayre,' was her greeting.

Then it all returned to him—the battledore and shuttlecock, the mad galloping up and down stairs, the surreptitious descents to the kitchen, the visits to the housekeeper's room, the kisses, the quarrels, the jam, the scoldings, the delights snatched with a fearful joy and terror from under the very eyes of Higgs père. The change was so complete and so absurd, Colonel Gayre felt the corners of his mouth twitching under the shelter of that friendly moustache, which had so often protected his character for gravity; but he managed to say what he ought to have said, and say it well. And then Mr. Jubbins appeared, and the visit passed off pleasantly; and the Jubbins' children, who were supposed, by a Bloomsbury fiction, to inherit the beauty of their mother and the virtues of their father, were introduced, and politics, as well as more material fare, were discussed; and the head of the house hoped Colonel Gayre would never feel a stranger in it.

Then once again the years went by, and during the course of them Mr. Jubbins waxed richer and richer, and Mrs. Jubbins comelier, and the Gayres got a little poorer; and everything seemed going on in the same monotonous groove

much as usual, when one day in the spring of 1865, Mr. Jubbins, returning home from the City somewhat earlier than usual, complained of having caught a cold and not feeling very well.

Ever after he never felt very well, and it was during the long and painful illness which supervened, and eventually carried him where there is no more pain and no more sorrow (and Mr. Nicholas Gayre hoped no more whist), that Mrs. Jubbins won her golden spurs as a wife.

Nursing him she lost flesh and colour, but never cheerfulness. To the last she took a smile with her into the sick-room; and when Mr. Jubbins died, it was with his poor wasted hand clasped tight in hers.

'The best woman in the world!' said old Mr. Gayre enthusiastically, an opinion his son did not feel inclined to controvert.

He considered Mrs. Jubbins' conduct towards her husband unexceptionable; and if she failed to interest her old playfellow, it was rather because of some deficiency on his part than any shortcoming on hers.

After the death there ensued more than a nine days' wonder. With the exception of a very small sum secured to the children and a few legacies of no great amount, everything was left unconditionally to the widow.

'Literally everything,' said Mr. Gayre senior, who was executor. 'She'll have the whole City of London asking her in marriage,' thought Mr. Nicholas; but he did not say so.

He knew nothing vexed his father to such an extent as any reflections on the City; therefore, if the Lord Mayor and Aldermen and every member of the Corporation had come courting to Brunswick-square, he would have re-

frained his tongue from comment.

But, as a matter of fact, nobody did anything of the sort. Mrs. Jubbins afforded the many admirers she no doubt possessed small chance of declaring their sentiments.

For a year she lived in the strictest seclusion, having Mrs. Higgs, now also a widow, resident with her, seeing no one except a few old and intimate friends, and mourning most deeply and unaffectedly for the husband whose loss, as she told Mr. Gayre, she felt more deeply day by day.

This was all as it should be; yet, at the end of a twelvemonth, Mr. Gayre decided there is a limit even to mourning and propriety, and that it would be a serious loss to the world if such a woman took her grief to nurse for ever.

'It is time she began to wean it,' thought the banker. This was after the great crash of 1866, and his attention had been directed even more than usual to the solid advantages conferred by a large income. 'She's the very wife for Nicholas, if he can only be brought to think so. What is there against the match? Nothing. What is there in favour of it? Everything.' And indeed so many golden reasons seemed to point to the Jubbins-Gayre alliance as a most desirable one for both parties that the banker decided some step ought to be taken, unless Nicholas meant to permit such a prize to slip through his careless fingers.

So entirely at length did this idea take possession of his mind that he determined to broach the subject to 'my son Nicholas.'

It was one Saturday morning, and senior and junior were alone in the private room at Gayres', when the old man, without any leading up to the question, asked,

'Do you never think of getting married, Nicholas?'

'Well, no, sir,' answered Nicholas; 'at least, for a long time past I have not. Once in a life, surely, is enough for a man to make a fool of himself;' which remark had reference to a wild romantic passion of the speaker's youth which had come to a disastrous conclusion.

'Ah, you must forget all that,' said Mr. Gayre. 'I am sure you would be a great deal happier married. All men should marry, more particularly men who, like yourself, have an old name to transmit, and an old business to bequeath. I know nothing which would give me such pleasure as to see you united to a good wife. You have been such a dutiful son, Nicholas, you deserve to meet with a woman who could give you more love even than your old father has done.'

There was a touch of deep feeling in Mr. Gayre's voice as he spoke; and as Nicholas did not know very well what to answer, he only said,

'Thank you, sir.'

'And there is a woman,' proceeded the banker, 'who, I am sure, would make you happy, and I think would take you if you asked her.'

'Indeed!' exclaimed his son.

'Yes, Eliza Jubbins.' The plunge was made, and Mr. Gayre felt he could go on. 'A most suitable match in every respect, Nicholas. She is a few years younger than yourself. She is still a very handsome woman; you know how she acquitted herself as a wife. You remember what a daughter she was. She has—but there, I won't mix money matters up with the business. If she had not a penny a year, she would still be a treasure in herself. We know all about her since the day she

was born. No after-clap can come in that quarter; and I believe—I do believe—she always felt a great regard for you.'

It would be idle to state that so astute a man as Nicholas had not known for some time previously whither his father's desires were drifting. Nevertheless, this plain intimation of what Gayres expected from him in the way of a fresh sacrifice came with the force of a blow.

Marry Eliza Jubbins! become stepfather to the young Jubbinses! son-in-law to clever, manœuvring Mrs. Higgs! Settle down for the term of his natural life among the Bloomsbury connection—go voluntarily into the penal servitude of eating, drinking, sleeping, thinking, visiting, with a class he knew he could never really care for, seemed to this man too dreadful a doom even to hear mentioned by another.

Nevertheless, he did not say 'No.' Long experience of his father had taught him—the wisest policy in all family games—was to play not trumps, but the most insignificant and inoffensive card he could find in his hand.

One of those he threw out now.

'But it is early days to talk of anything of that sort,' he objected. 'She has not been a widow much more than a year, and her tears are not dry yet.'

'Dry them yourself, my boy, then,' recommended Mr. Gayre, with a chuckle of delight at finding that Nicholas took his suggestion so coolly. 'There is no time for winning a woman equal to that while her eyes are still wet. Besides, I feel sure she has a fondness for you. I am old, but I can see; bless you, I have not lived all these years with my eyes shut.'

'That I am certain you have not, sir,' replied Nicholas, in a

tone in which respect and a pleasant flattery were dexterously blended. 'Yet I must confess it seems to me premature to discuss such a matter.'

'Not in the least—not in the least. Jubbins has been dead over a twelvemonth,' said the banker, practically 'going into figures.'

'Still—to say nothing of my own objections—I do not think Mrs. Jubbins would feel grateful if she knew we were already disposing of her in marriage.'

'There may be something in what you remark,' agreed Mr. Gayre. 'Spite of her excellent sense, Eliza was always a little given to sentimentality. We'll speak no more about the affair, then, for the present; only, *Nicholas*, you will promise me to think about it.'

'Yes, I will do that, on the con-

dition that no word is dropped to Mrs. Jubbins. I must feel myself quite free; for, to be quite plain, I do not believe I shall ever marry.'

'That is simply nonsense, my son. You owe something to your family. You are almost the last of the Gayres. John has no sons; we have not even a distant relation of our own name. If you do not marry, and have children, who is to carry on the business?'

Mr. Nicholas made no reply to a question his father evidently considered crushing; but he thought two things—one, that the future might safely be left to look after its own affairs; and another, that if things went on in Lombard-street as they were going, at the end of another thirty years there would be no business called Gayres to carry on.

(To be continued.)

LEAVES FROM THE LOG OF THE WANDEROO.

III.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

If you bring me a bird from the inner regions of the dark continent, or from the innermost regions of the Pampas, I can, after a glance at it, tell you how to feed and treat it, in order to keep it in health; albeit I may never have seen such a bird before, nor any of the natural family to which it belongs. This is easy enough of course; just as simple as cipher-reading, isn't it? To be sure it is, and I have a learned friend—so learned is he, indeed, that I am sometimes half afraid of him—and I know, though he never told me, that if you were to bring him a paring from the big-toe nail of the pre-Adamite man he could build up, as it were, and sketch you therefrom the whole individual. Now further than saying that the saucy craft, leaves from the log of which I am writing, was a composite gun-vessel, with five guns and a rattling good rate of speed, I did not, in my last paper, waste ink in describing her. Why? Because her very name indicates the manner of ship she was.

The Wanderoo!

I wonder, by the way, who has the choosing of names for the ships of war that crowd our royal naval seaports, and carry England's bit of snow-white bunting from that rugged cinder Aden to the green Pacific slopes, from the frozen isles of Franz Joseph in the north to the Antarctic ice?

Is there more than one Lord

Commissioner in the business, would you think? Doubtless there are several. Maybe royalty itself has a shy at it; and even an odd ordinary admiral may occasionally be invited to suggest something. Nay, I have heard it hinted that even ladies are sometimes consulted about this important matter. But I daresay this is not often the case. Names will sometimes suggest themselves—come by inspiration, as it were. But neither, I opine, is this very often the case; for the big-wigs at the head of the Navy department are, as a rule, of the matter-of-fact diathesis. There is precious little poetry in their composition.

No. I happen to know that names of Navy ships are mostly ground out, worked-up after much painful cogitation, and the consulting of many a moth-eaten volume of classic lore and heathen mythology, and even works of natural history. The name, of course, is chosen ere ever the vessel is commenced, and the length of her keel has a deal to do with it. It would never enter the brain of even a Lord Commissioner to dignify a two-hundred-tonner with a high-sounding name. Such pigmy warriors have to be content with the names of birds or beasts or second-rate rivers, and go on their watery way rejoicing.

But when it comes to something over 3000 horse-power—ah! that is quite another matter; we must ponder well; we must pinch our chins, and knit our

brows, and gaze on vacancy, perhaps for a whole hour on a stretch, ere we can find a name worthy of a craft like that.

What's in a name? A great deal, so far as a ship of war is concerned; and any young officer, if he has been even a dog-watch in the service, can make a pretty good guess at both the class and armament of a vessel if he only hears her name mentioned.

Such names, for instance, as the Sprightly, the Dart, the Swift, the Speedy, the Ready, the Hasty, the Urgent, the Forward, the Lively, the Express, and the Dasher, speak volumes to the initiated in naval lore. Handy in the extreme are such small craft in the day of battle—*aides de combat* to the great ships who are sullenly thundering and dealing death and destruction from their flame-clad turrets or sides. Low in the water, of small tonnage, their guns few but efficient, they can go anywhere and do almost anything. But there are more of them; they may be counted by the dozen. The battle is raging, and yonder steams the Insolent, a steel gun-boat with a double-screw, and only *one* gun. It is like her impudence to brush so closely past that hostile thunderberg; but her one shot tells, and elicits a terrible answer. Then when the white smoke has cleared away, where is the Insolent? Sunk? Not a bit of it; she is half a mile away, somewhere else, doing more mischief. The Blazer is at it too, so is the little Bouncer, the Bonetta, the Boxer, and the Bulldog, to say nothing of the Bruiser, the Dapper, and the Bloodhound. And the Ready, and the Rocket, and the Torch; the Tweed and the Tees, the Thistle and Thrasher, and the Tickler and Teazer, and the Don, and the Dee, and the Tay.

'*Marbleu*!' roars the commodore of a sadly 'for-foughten' frigate, 'I can fight your big ships easily and well; but, *sacré*! those musquitoes are too much for my patience.'

We have small ships in the service whose very names ought to strike terror into the breasts of a foreign foe if they only heard them. A Hyæna, a Lion, a Lynx, a fretful Porcupine, a deadly Rattlesnake, a Basilisk, a Scorpion, and a Salamander. Then we have birds of prey, like the Buzzard, the Vulture, the Kestrel, the Goshawk, and Kite, ready at a moment's notice to swoop down upon and destroy an enemy's fleet.

One would expect the Ant, the Midge, the Mosquito, the Hornet, and Wasp to be somewhat annoying to the foe in war-time, and so they would be; while the Badger would snap, and the Bullfrog croak to some account; but could the graceful Antelope, the modest Hart, and gentle Fawn do anything? From the names you would assuredly think that butter would not melt in their mouths; but in action they would soon show that their teeth were made to grind as well as to graze.

And here comes another fleet of birds, mostly of a feather; the Albatross, the Bittern, the Bustard, the Flamingo, the Cygnet, the Seagull, and Plover, and Curlew; each and all of them more terrible than their names seem to indicate. And yonder lies the Kingfisher, quite ready to catch her fish; and the Swallow, too, will have her fly; while the little Linnet, the Bullfinch, and Philomel could sing such songs in the ears of Britain's foes, as they would remember for many and many a day.

N.B. — It is worthy of remark, that while we have a Philomel in the service, we have no Nightin-

gale; from which I argue that even our Lords Commissioners have not quite forgotten all the Latin they learned at school.

Well, almost any one could guess that the Dromedary was a store-ship, the Mercury a despatch-vessel, and the sly old Fox a ship to be sent on particular service.

Some ships are named after rivers, like the Shannon, the Ganges, the Clyde, and the Wye, &c. Some after cities, as the London, the Bristol, and others. But if towns and rivers, why not mountains too? Why not the Lochnagar, the Ben Nevis, the Skiddaw, and the Snowdon? Again, we have names derived from the canine world, such as the Beagle, the Bulldog, the Bloodhound, the Foxhound, and Mastiff. The Beagle is well named—she is a mite; but the Bloodhound and Mastiff are not; they have but one gun each, just the same as the Weazel or the Pike. But here is a suggestion dedicated to their lordships. We can't have too many ships, can we? Very well; lay down a new frigate, and call her the Newfoundland; then another, to be named the St. Bernard; a third the Boarhound, and a fourth the Otterhound—a dog that will face anything in the water or out of it; but pray don't give us a Pomeranian, a Pug, or a Poodle. Only, if you want to add to the Blazer class, do not forget the wiry Fox Terrier, the Irish Daredevil Terrier, the Skye, the Dandie Dinmont, and Scottish Diehard.

There are a large number of ships in the service named out of compliment to great people. We have the Victoria, the Royal Adelaide, the Royal William, and Royal Albert; the Duke of Wellington, the Iron Duke, the Alexandra, the Prince Albert, the

Northumberland, the Raleigh, the Sultan, the Shah, and the Victor Emanuel.

Names have been borrowed from ancient history—higgledy-piggledy, as one might say; though the Achilles is a good name for an armour-plated 16-gunner—in-vulnerable except in the heel. The Agamemnon is far-sounding but far-fetched; and her sister ship, the Ajax, is another name derived from the siege of Troy. The Atlas denotes strength, but she does not possess a deal of it. The Atalanta is named after the daughter of an ancient king, who—the daughter, not the old man—was a wonder with the skipping-rope. Then comes the Bacchante, and she is not a blue-ribbon ship. The Scylla and Charybdis are of course sister ships, and I pity the enemy's vessel that, escaping from the latter, happened to fall foul of the former: something would sink. The virtuous Bellerophon is better known to our Jacks as the Billy-ruffian; and of the two names the latter has certainly the more sense in it. The Gorgon is a striking name, or meant to be; the Orpheus and Eurydice have been unfortunate names. Both are gone, with most of the brave officers and men who formed their crew when destruction overwhelmed them. The Eurydice of the ancient classics was the wife of Orpheus; she was killed on her wedding-day: the Eurydice of our naval history foundered in a squall within sight and almost hail of the shore, and while bearing up under a press of canvas for the harbour's mouth. The Orpheus of old was torn in pieces by furies because he could not cease to mourn the death of his wife: the Orpheus ship of war was torn to pieces by rocks and waves while floundering on a bar in Australian seas.

We have a Neptune in the service, and we have also a most disreputable son of his, to wit, the torpedo ram Polyphemus. The one-eyed giant after whom the ship is called was slain by the brave and eloquent son of Laertes and Anticlea with a firebrand; it would be strange and sad if our bold ram met with a similar fate, or got hoist by one of her own petards.

There used to be an Orestes in the service. I've missed her of late; she is sold, hulked, or gone under. The name had neither rhyme nor reason in it. Orontes is better; the name of our well-known troop-ship, but still it sounds an unlucky name, because—omen a-vast!—the ancient king of that name perished in the depths of ocean. The Orion of mythology was a lively youth, and so is the corvette of that name. But Orion was a son of Neptune—*et aliorum*—so he has some right to confer a name on a British ship of war. The Hydra hasn't, unless the derivation of the word (*ὕδρως*) be taken into account; but the ancient Hydra was a hundred-headed snake, brained by Hercules, while our ship the Hydra doesn't mount a hundred guns, but only four. Of course we have a Hercules, a goodly coast-guardsmen; and long may she float! The Galatea, in which our gallant Duke served and fiddled so long, is, as every one knows, a sturdy frigate; the original Galatea wasn't quite a sea-nymph herself, but she was the daughter of Doris, and grand-daughter of old Oceanus, a sea-god, and a great grand-daughter on the mother's side of Uranus himself. Pedigree enough, surely; and, what is more, if Galatea wasn't exactly a sea-nymph she was beloved by a sailor-boy, and his name was Polyphemus.

What a capital name for a torpedo-ship, by the way, is the Vesuvius!

Ancient English history gives a few names to our Navy ships, to wit, the Agincourt and Boadicea; but the craze has been of late to give our mighty iron bulwarks plain solid names culled from plain solid English, and what better could you wish than these: the Monarch, the Majestic, the Triumph, the Superb, the Thunderer, the Devastation, the Terror, the Impregnable, the Implacable, the Inconstant, the Invincible, and last, but certainly not least, the Inflexible.

But rosebud lips surely suggested names like the following: the Amethyst, the Topaze, the Turquoise, the Waterwitch, the Seaflower, and the Zephyr.

And where are the wooden walls of old England? Those that have not been broken up are ungunned, dismasted, dismantled, and shelved; reduced to hulks, to hulks, floating barns, or what you will. They are to be found lying in creeks or up rivers or by dock-yard wharfs; many are coal dépôts, powder or gun-cotton dépôts, floating factories, floating chapels, schools, or juvenile reformatories, and some are entirely appropriated.

How are the mighty fallen! Ah, but what tales those old hulks could unfold, could their figure-heads but speak, of the brave deeds done on board! of the gallant men and true who fell sword in hand beside their guns; of splintered masts, bursting shells, and falling rigging; of decks slippery with the heart's blood of heroes, and of a flag that fluttered high above the smoke, and never would be furled until the shout of victory mingled with the moans of the dying.

I was quartered once on one

of these unappropriated hulks—an old, old frigate—for more than a week. I had joined my newly-commissioned ship before she was quite out of the condition of chaos, before the stores were struck below, before the carpenters had ceased to make day and night hideous with their din. So I had my bed made on board the hulk, and much preferred it to the best hotel on shore. I was captain and purser and carpenter and little cabin-boy all in one, for there wasn't a soul on board but myself.

But how delightful it was—I was young—to sit there of an evening in that quaint old deserted saloon, reading Marryat's novels! And this I used to do far into the night, for there was no sentry to order my light out. Deserted, did I say? It might have seemed so to some; it was not so to me, for I could and did people that ship with the creations of my own imagination. I conjured up a gray-headed kindly old commodore, and seated him in an arm-chair beside the table, and his uniformed servant came gliding in and went gliding out silently, quiet but busy, as he used to be in the days of yore; and small smart midshipmites also came and went, taking orders; and the purser's clerk entered and stood shyly by the water-filter, pen in mouth and papers in hand, waiting till the commodore should look up and invite him to advance; and the surgeon came in with the sick-book, and the master with the log; and while the commodore talks with these officers the first lieutenant, waiting his turn, stands patiently aside and plays with the old man's setter. I could hear, too, just outside the door the occasional ring of the sentry's rifle on deck, and the hum of many voices,

and overhead the tread of numerous feet; while, loud over the roaring of the wind, flick of sheet, and flap of canvas—for there were sailors in those days—short stern words of command, or the 'Away aloft, there!' of the officer on watch.

But I shall never forget the first evening a couple of shore boatmen pulled me off to my craft. I had been dining on shore. There was a bit of a blow on, and a nasty short jabbling sea, so it was not until we were well off that one of my sou'-westered crew asked from under his wet brown moustache,

'What ship, sir?'

There was a pause after my reply, a pause of fully a minute; then the first speaker's mate remarked,

'I think you said the Royal A—, didn't you, sir?'

'I said the P—,' I replied, 'as plain as lips could speak; does the wind affect your hearing, my man?'

'That it don't, sir,' said the fellow, changing his quid to the other cheek, 'but there's nobody in the P—, bar the rats.'

'And the ghost,' put in the other.

'Of course I means "and the ghost,"' said the mate; 'and I stands, leastways I sits, corrected.'

I did not say anything more for fully five minutes. I did not wish to let them think I was at all anxious to learn anything about my spirit-shipmate. 'Easy, port oar,' I said presently, adding carelessly, 'What is that ghost of yours like?'

'Taint no ghost of ours,' one replied, 'but years and years ago two bo's'ns used to live all by theirselves in the old P—. And one mornin' one on 'em was found dead—murdered like—on the

orlop-deck, but no one can tell, till this day, where the other went.'

'Yes,' I said, feeling interested; 'and the murdered man's ghost walks?'

'That's it, sir, he walks; and, what's more, he carries his head.'

'What, under his arm?'

'O no, sir,' replied the man with great gravity, 'not like that. He carries his head by the hair, just the same as you would a lantern, and when he walks about the decks, he does be continually looking for something like, and always stopping here and there, and holding down the head close to the deck and bending down over it, just as you'd do with a lantern, again, sir.'

'In, bow—way enough,' I cried, and next moment I had said good-night and was standing on the deck of the deserted ship.

I did not think much more about the ghost story; but three or four nights after this I was poring over *Midshipman Easy* by the spluttering light of a purser's dip, and was just thinking of turning in, for it was long past midnight, when the sensation crept over me that I was not quite alone.

I started, snuffed the dip, and listened. Yes, there wasn't a doubt about it; I could distinctly hear a shuffling tread, just outside the door on the fighting-deck. And presently a voice. And the voice evidently spoke to itself; low, but distinctly.

'I must find him. He must be in here.'

Then came a tapping at the door.

My heart stood still. It was the ghost, I thought; the ghost, for a dead certainty. The ghost with his awful lantern, and—looking for me.

I opened that door as one opens doors in a dream, and there sure

enough stood a being with a lantern—no, not the ghost, only a blue-jacket.

'Beg your pardon, sir,' said the man, touching his cap, 'but the midshipman of the watch says, "Please will ye come on board your own ship at once! the cook's killed hisself 'cause he couldn't get the copper to boil."'

What a joyous feeling of relief! No ghost; the cook had 'killed hisself,' that was all.

One would have thought that the midshipman, under the circumstances, ought to have applied to an undertaker, not a surgeon; but guessing that the cook hadn't killed hisself entirely, I lost no time in getting into the dingy and going on board.

The poor fellow I found lying, half-dressed, on his back on deck. He had stabbed himself with an ordinary pocket-knife because the commander, a tall hard man, had been bullying him the day before. He wasn't dead, but had lost much blood, and was hysterical and silly. I sent him to hospital, and I do not know what became of him.

But what, the reader may well ask, has this to do with the Log of the Wanderoo? Nothing, I grant you; and if I'm forgiven for wandering from my subject, I pledge you the word of a British sailor I shall not digress again.

'What's in a name?' was to be the burden of the song of this chapter. I've tried to prove that there is something in the names of Navy ships. Take the Wanderoo as a last sample. She was on a roving commission, hence the 'Wander.' But the Wanderoo is a species of monkey. Well, we, the Wanderoos, were all monkeys, every one of us—powder-monkeys.

IV.

THE DAYS WHEN WE WENT GIPSYING.

WE were all of us pretty young in the Wanderoo. With the exception of Pumpkin, we were all on the weather-side of thirty, some of us considerably up to windward too. So of course we were all as happy and merry as merry and happy could be. It was currently reported that Pumpkin had a wife, but he never said much about her—perhaps he thought all the more. McGregor, our engineer, was a roughish bit of metal, but a splendid fellow for all that, and it was quite a treat to smoke with him: he had such queer yarns to spin, and such queer broad Scotch ways of spinning them, that you couldn't have helped being amused, had you been ever so dull and melancholy.

We knew he was married, because he couldn't keep it secret. McGregor, when on deck, used to smoke uncomfortable-looking cutties, which he often held with his teeth, even when talking or laughing; but he always used to take his pipe out of his mouth when he spoke of his wife, or his 'little body,' as he fondly called her.

'Heigho!' he would often say, with a far-away look in his light-blue eyes, 'I wonder what the little body is doin'?'

And yet, strange to say, this worthy officer, after being abroad for a year or two, used to send one of his assistants to meet his wife at the station, and convey her on board.

'You see,' he explained to us, 'I'm a kind o' shy. I dinna like a scene. Noo, ye know the little body canna vera weel throw herself into my assistant's arms at the station, and weep.'

But in spite of the facts that McGregor's shirt-collars were not changed every day, that he wore

his cap on the after-part of his head, even on shore, and had three buttons mounted on his sleeve above the gold lace, that he had a plain face, and did not shave fashionably, we all liked him, and respected him none the less because he seemed so fond of the little body he had left behind him.

None of the rest of us had any tie at all on shore, and even I myself had quite forgotten my saucy Adeline long before we sat down to turtle dinner at Ascension, or climbed the cactus-covered braes of St. Helena. No wonder, then, that we felt as free as the wind, and as happy as sandflies in summer-time.

Just abaft the mainmast was a favourite smoking-stand with us after tiffin, and it was here that McGregor told his very best stories. This was a kind of no man's ground, you see; for neither the gunner nor bo's'n was out of order by coming that far aft, nor were we ward-room officers lowering our dignity by going that far forward. Even Smart, the first 'luff,' who preferred to tread the weather-side of the quarter-deck, often lingered here for a good five minutes to hear the end of a yarn before resuming his walk.

McGregor was quietly broadly humorous, and his stories did not lose anything from his graphic delineation. But it was a positive pleasure to see little Paymaster Pumpkin laughing. Laughter seemed a spirit that took possession of him for the time being, wreathed his round face and eyes with smiles, shook him, convulsed him, made him bend forward, lift his leg and hit it, then as suddenly straighten himself up to get the stitch out of his side, then hold back his head and laugh, shaking all over like a jelly-fish

with a fit of the ague, till the very men that clustered round the bows, although they hadn't heard the yarn, caught the infection, and joined the chorus; so in reality the roar of laughter beginning with Pumpkin rippled right round the ship.

But Mr. McGregor never laughed a bit himself.

On bright starlight evenings after dinner, whether lying at anchor or sailing—we didn't steam more than we could help—from port to port of our tropical cruising ground, we always gathered aft, and sat or lounged near the screw-well; and there the captain would join us, and we knew he liked to. Had you been on the quarter-deck, all you could have seen of us would have been the bright ends of our cigars; but you could have told from the sound of our voices that we were very comfortable and merry indeed.

Though Zanzibar was our headquarters at the time of which I am writing, we went creeping around everywhere, among the many nameless but beautiful islands along the coast, down as far as Delagoa Bay, and up north far beyond the Line, to shores on which we never dared to land without cutlass and Colt.

The special service in which the Wanderoo was at this time engaged was of a threefold nature; in other words, we were killing, or trying to kill, three birds with one stone. We were holding some mysterious kind of diplomatic intercourse with the Sultan of Zanzibar, who, like most Eastern potentates, took his time to think over everything; we were engaged surveying and sounding along the coast; and we were hunting down slavers wherever we could find them. Sounding or surveying was slow work, and, if the truth must be

told, very silly; for new reefs appear on that coast as regularly every year as Christmas Annals in England, and old ones change to islands or disappear entirely. The captain of a ship who should attempt to boldly cross a reef without two men in the chains, simply because the chart showed that he might do so, would be guilty of a recklessness that might lead to the destruction of his ship, and loss of life as well.

No, to lie with banked fires, not far off a friendless and uninteresting shore, with the pitch bubbling in the seams even beneath the awning, and nothing to do but lean over the bulwarks and long for luncheon, was certainly slow work. And it was worse if you went away in the boats and potted around over the shoals. Fancy lolling in the stern-sheets, and listening for hours at a stretch to the splash of the falling lead-line, the dripping of the water from the rope as it was hauled home, and the constant sing-song of the men, 'And a half three,' or 'By the deep five,' and so on, *ad nauseam*. Native outrigger canoes would pass us sometimes, and must have wondered what kind of bait we were using, to fish so long and catch nothing at all. In these sounding trips, fishing was in reality not allowed, but I have taken many a bonny bonito on the sly, nevertheless.

We were never sorry when these surveying cruises were over, and we could 'up steam' and slip away round to Zanzibar again or Mozambique, as the case might be. The city or town of Zanzibar is nowadays almost too well known to need description. It is possibly one of the strangest places in the world. Wherever you wander, you wonder—wonder at its quaintness, its picturesque-

ness, often at its wealth and even beauty; more often at scenes of indescribable squalor, cruelty, and wretchedness. In its population there are as many grades of society and castes as there are colours of complexion, from the perspiring cowrie-laden ebony slave, who has no religion at all, who is not supposed even to own a soul, and whose body is literally thrown to the dogs on the sea-beach ere the breath is well out of it, to the tall graceful toga'd Arab, with perfumed locks, gilded turban, and jewelled sword-belt, whom paradise and the houris are waiting to welcome, when he is done with life beneath the sun.

But few besides the writer have ever penned a line about the beauty of the island of Zanzibar itself, its mango forests, its groves of orange, citron, and lime, its towering cocoa-palms, its plantains, bananas, and pine-apples, and its wondrous wealth of flowers and beauty—beauty that everything that grows or creeps or flies possesses; why, even its lizards are of the deepest sea-green barred with crimson.

My messmates and myself often went gipsying in those lovely woods. We always rode out on gaily caparisoned, small, but fiery Arab steeds borrowed from the Sultan's stables. We always rode out on these, but—well, we did not invariably ride back on them—we got unshipped sometimes; for either those horses were the most unmanageable, self-willed beasts ever bestrode by Christian legs, or sailors cannot ride.

But the kind of gipsying that my messmates and self enjoyed the most was boat cruising in pursuit of slavers. Our fleet usually consisted of two boats with crews amounting to about twenty men. The Wanderoo would

appoint a rendezvous where we were to be picked up, say two or three weeks after; then we parted with a cheer, away went the Wanderoo in one direction, and away went we in another.

We were fully provisioned and armed. Our arms were rifles, cutlasses, and revolvers, with cartridges galore, and a few other nicknacks in the shape of axes and pikes. Our provisions did not extend to luxuries, and principally consisted of salt pork and biscuits, peas, beans, butter, coffee, sugar, water, quinine, and rum. On the latter we were not heavy, and usually preferred keeping it till after dinner in the evening; but the quinine, in the form of solution, was served out about twelve by the sun, when, the boats being ranged together, the doctor's black bottle was solemnly pulled out of the locker, and a glass handed round to every man Jack, beginning with the officers. Bitter and nasty some might have called it; but our fellows nodded pleasantly to each other ere they tossed off their dram, 'making believe' it was the best of good rum.

Then, perhaps, just as we had finished, some one would sight a dhow, and immediately all the excitement of the chase began. If there was no wind, all the better for us—we got alongside all the sooner; for those dhows can sail faster far than any boat we can send after them, though not so fast as bullets can fly. We were sparing in the use of the latter, however, and of the rocket apparatus. We were not like a little midshipman friend of mine, and a true descendant of Midshipman Easy he was too, but only a child. I was in his boat—I'm not sure I wasn't in charge, though not nominally. However, we sighted a great savage-looking

bulk of a dhow, and gave chase. After an hour or two of hard pulling the dhow lowered her mainsail, when, to my astonishment, Midshipman Easy prepared to lie off and fire at her.

'I'm not going to board that great thundering thing yet a bit, doctor,' he said. 'Let us pepper her for an hour or so, and *thoroughly* quieten her.'

'But,' I cried, 'she makes no show of resistance.'

'Never mind,' was the reply; 'she might, you know.'

But something very decisive that I whispered in his ear changed his mind, and we were on the dhow's decks a few minutes after.

Our luncheon was usually a very simple meal: perhaps a morsel of salt pork raw, and a biscuit steeped in the salt sea by way of giving it a relish. But better was this, we used to say, with peace and jollity, than a stalled ox with dissension.

Breakfast was a far more enjoyable meal. We were probably lying at anchor all night near the mainland, but would take a cruise round first thing in the morning, by way of putting an extra fine edge upon appetite. Then landing in some sandy cove on some nameless but beautiful island, a few of the handiest hands would be told off to light a fire and cook breakfast, while the rest of us went to bathe. The Naiads themselves might have envied us our plunging revels in that warm, delicious, sunlit sea; memories of the time thus spent will dwell in my mind for aye. I may forget the islands themselves,

with their coral rocks, greenery of trees, and wealth of tropical foliage and flora, but never the snowy sands, never the sparkling water, never the glorious sunshine. O, ye summer sojourners by Brighton or Scarborough, your minds warped and bodies wrapped in the garments of conventionality, how little do ye know what sea-bathing really means!

But the toils of the day over, and the day itself nearing its close, before the sun went down, and darkness enshrouded us, we landed on the mainland, to cook our dinner and spend the evening as real travellers only know how to. We never failed to find our way to some native village, nor to purchase from them of the fat and fruit of the land. We demanded a market, and would not be denied, though we paid like men and Englishmen. But pen of mine is powerless to describe the flavour of the glorious soup and stew we concocted for our evening meal in that capacious caldron.

Was it any wonder that after dinner the spirit of mirth at times took possession of us, and that, to the inspiring strains of Watkins's guitar, wild breakdowns were danced on the beach, or that our men took unto themselves partners from among the dusky daughters of the Somalis, and extemporised dances that would have puzzled and delighted Dan Godfrey himself? What were we, after all, but sailors at play in the merry moonshine? Ah, but it was not always merry moonshine with us, as the next leaf from my log will sadly testify.

GUILLE, DE MER.

THE FOREIGNERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS,' 'VALENTINA,' ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

FOREIGNERS.

A BALCONY ran round the inner square of the Hôtel de la Couronne, and below it, in the paved court, stood tall old myrtles and orange-trees in light-green tubs. Vines and flowering creepers ran climbing up the supports of the balcony. Into it opened a corridor with large windows, paved with old red hexagonal tiles. The broad shallow-stepped staircase, and the large rooms on the first floor, were paved with the same tiles, and there was no carpet anywhere.

Monsieur Cliquet's grandfather, in the beginning of this century, was the first landlord of the inn. Before the Revolution, it had been the town house of an old noble family, which was entirely swept away in the troubles of those days. The Cliquet of to-day was an amiable energetic little man; his wife was a sweet-looking gentle-mannered woman. The management of the house was very much left to Zénobie, the head *femme de chambre*, who, without any fuss or distraction, was everywhere at once, and kept all the wheels going with wonderful regularity. French people were very fond of the Couronne, and came there constantly in a seldom-failing stream. Many Tourlyon worthies breakfasted and dined there every day, and smoked their cigars in the court in the evening. With foreigners it was not quite so popular. Tourlyon was a little out of the way of regular tourists, and Zénobie was not fond of the

English; she ruled despotically over her own country-people, but these strangers were less easily managed. They complained sometimes; they asked for troublesome things, and found fault with the bill. Still, there were great differences between them, and to those who knew how to behave, Zénobie was all graciousness. She did her best to send the others to the new staring Hôtel de France, which some upstart had built a few years ago on the boulevards.

Zénobie hated people who could not talk French, and wondered why they did not stay in their own country. As if French people ever wanted to go to England! They were wise, and stayed at home, where one could be understood. These Englishwomen in their men's hats and ulsters, trying to ask all sorts of ridiculous questions,—whether the beds were aired, for instance,—and objecting to let Adolphe, the *garçon de chambre*, bring in their coffee and hot water in the morning—bah! they were too laughable. Zénobie and Adolphe had a way of forgetting all these prejudices, and enjoying the disgust of the Englishwomen. But they had very great respect to persons, and if they took a fancy to any one their memory became excellent.

Mr. Mowbray, when he arrived with his wife and daughter that afternoon, conquered them at once. He spoke French very well, with a charming voice and accent. His manner to Zénobie was just as polite as to Madame Cliquet herself. Mrs. Mowbray, though

quieter, was equally agreeable in her way, and her daughter was evidently an angel. One look was enough; the whole hotel was at her feet.

Madame Cliquet gave her best rooms to these new guests; they were close to the top of the stairs. The beds were in alcoves, with red curtains drawn across them; there were mirrors and marble-topped tables, and thick mats on the red floor. From the high windows one looked up and down the picturesque length of the Rue Notre Dame, strange old carved houses, with flowers growing on their roofs and brightening their dark garret windows; little quaint shops down below; here and there the porte-cochère of some large house whose front windows were all shut up. Far away up the street, the Place Notre Dame lay in front of the cathedral; a few yards below the hotel, a broad flight of steps led to the old church of St. Martin. There were plenty of people in the street, walking up and down, standing at the shop-doors, leaning out of the windows. A smart carriage came rattling over the stones; then a drag drawn by three great white horses, stepping proudly in their shaggy blue collars, and shaking their bells, while their dark-faced driver cracked his whip.

Then the cathedral bells rang out, and St. Martin's answered them in deeper, nearer tones; and the sun shone dazzling on the flowers opposite, and Pauline Mowbray, who was standing at her window all this time, fascinated by the bright picture of the street, remembered that she ought to get ready for dinner. She heard her father and mother talking in the next room. Presently he went down-stairs, and Mrs. Mowbray came into her

daughter's room. She was one of those women, fresh, cheerful, and healthy, with beautiful hair and complexion, who look as if they could never grow old. Even a long journey has no power over their appearance; they are never tired, never ruffled. Pauline, in spite of her beauty, was not her mother's equal in all this.

'Yes, I know I am late,' she said, 'but I could not tear myself away from the window. What a delightful place this is! Mother, did you see that young Frenchman who passed us at the door?'

'That very good-looking young man, you mean?'

'Yes. Poor fellow, his face has been haunting me ever since. Anything so sad—I wonder what can be the matter with him? And wonderfully handsome; but not like a man of the present day, somehow. He might have been on his way to the guillotine.'

'What fun it must be to have an imagination like yours, dear child! Your father was talking just now about your melancholy Marquis. He reminded him of somebody he met once in Paris, many years ago.'

'Melancholy Marquis! Do you know who he is, then?'

'Not in the least. That is what your father called him, and I thought it a good description. There is the dinner-bell. Are you ready?'

'Yes,' said Pauline. 'Did you ever see anything so charming as this hotel?'

'It is an old town house of somebody's,' said Mrs. Mowbray.

'Turned out in the Revolution. I shall dream of it,' said Pauline.

They found Mr. Mowbray in the dining-room—a long room, with brown panels and a polished floor. On the walls hung a number of old pictures, some of them portraits, others hunting and bat-

the scenes. Zénobie and two waiters were hovering about, and several Frenchmen had already taken their places.

Mr. Mowbray was young-looking, like his wife. He was tall, long-legged, and active, with no hair on his face, which was pleasant, thoughtful, and peculiar. His light hair grew long, and curled at the ends. His manner was a little enthusiastic, and he gave one the idea of failing slightly in common sense. Yet he had proved himself wise in a very great matter—he had married a sensible woman. Since his marriage his relations had given up a Philistine thick-headed way they had of calling him ‘poor George.’

There were a good many nice-looking people at the table d’hôte. Among them Pauline saw her Frenchman, but this time he was not alone. Two other young men were with him; they talked a good deal to each other, though he did not join in much. His eyes wandered now and then across the table towards the English party. He and his companions were evidently great favourites of Zénobie’s; she watched them with a smile on her face, and waited on them attentively.

After dinner she came up to Mrs. Mowbray, and asked whether madame would like to walk in the garden? It was pretty enough, and there were roses there. Perhaps madame and mademoiselle were fond of roses? If so, would they please to gather any they liked? They received this offer very amiably; and Zénobie, with her firm stately tread, led the way across the court, past the groups of tables and chairs, through a narrow passage, into the hotel garden. It was somewhat overgrown with shrubs and late straggling rose-bushes; the grass was

long; but there were paths wandering about, and on a little mound in the middle there was a prismatic glass ball set on a post, which glittered wonderfully in the declining sun. There was also a green dishevelled old fountain, with gold-fish in its basin, and some queer foreign fowls behind a wire-fence.

‘Brother officers, I suspect, not relations,’ said Mr. Mowbray, as he strolled with his wife and daughter among these attractions. ‘It is only the tall fellow who reminds me of M. de Maulévrier, and he does remind me of him tremendously. Those two fierce-looking lads are not the least like him.’

‘Papa, I thought there was a strong likeness in the youngest—the boyish one,’ said Pauline.

‘As unlike as two men could be,’ said her father decidedly. ‘But I shall find out. Stay here a few minutes while I get a cigar. We must go and look at the town presently.’

The two Englishwomen sat down on a little iron bench, and Pauline gathered a rose from a bush close by, and held it idly in her hand, looking at it. She was paler than usual, and some new thought or feeling had disturbed the tranquil peace of her brow and eyes; there was a slight contraction—a cloud upon the blue. She had travelled several hundred miles from Tourlyon. Mrs. Mowbray felt it by instinct.

‘That is a pretty rose,’ she said. ‘Do you know it?’

‘Yes. I forget its name. Aunt Lucia has it,’ said Pauline gently. ‘And it is in the Rectory garden too. How odd it is to be so far away!’

‘You have been such a home-bird all your life,’ said her mother, ‘but you don’t enjoy things any the less, I think.’

'O no—more; but one understands the meaning of things, and—you know,' said Pauline, laying her hand on her mother's.

Mrs. Mowbray held it fast for a moment. Neither she nor Pauline was often demonstrative, but their thoughts were both gone the same way, to hilly sheep-walks by an English sea, whose waters rose and fell against gray shelving cliffs. That old house under the hill had its music in the air, the wild song of the sea; and when the wind was blowing, those pines on the crest joined in with their Æolian harp.

Here, in France, a distant band was playing airs from an opera, and then, like a grand protest from more earnest days, the cathedral chimes broke out suddenly, followed by St. Martin's deep tones, and the more distant voice of other belfries. Pauline looked up smiling at her mother. Just then, round the turn in the path close to where they were sitting, came her father, and with him the melancholy Frenchman.

Mr. Mowbray introduced the Marquis de Maulévrier to his wife and daughter with quite an air of triumph, a sort of 'I told you so.' Gérard's face had brightened wonderfully. He smiled as he looked from one to the other of his new acquaintances—the charming original Englishman, his wife with her handsome kindly face, his lovely daughter.

'It is the most extraordinary thing, madame,' he said to Mrs. Mowbray; 'Monsieur Mowbray knew my father in Paris long ago—in fact, he had the honour of helping him to write a book. But we meet with so few English books in France, monsieur, I really do not know what it was; I should have so much pleasure in reading it.'

'You shall have it,' said Mr.

Mowbray; 'but it never had much success. I called it *Studies in the Great French Revolution*. M. de Maulévrier most kindly got admittance for me to some of the oldest and finest libraries in Paris and elsewhere; and he gave me a good many notes of his own—stories, traditions, and so forth. But the book was too Royalist in tone to take much with the public. Your family is still Legitimist, I suppose?'

'Certainly, monsieur.'

'And yet your brothers are in the army!'

The Marquis shrugged his shoulders. 'France and the Republic are not yet the same thing,' he said; 'they have not yet made it impossible for us to serve our country. There are only three ways open to old-fashioned people like us—the church, the army, and the navy; or else we do nothing.'

'Is that your case?' said Mr. Mowbray.

'Yes,' answered Gérard, with something like a sigh. But then he looked up, and quite accidentally met Pauline's eyes looking at him with the same interest as before. Something seemed to tell him that these suddenly found people were his friends; that they liked him, were glad to see him, cared to know his history. And he felt the sort of exaltation that a knight of old may be supposed to have felt under the eyes of his lady, whether she cared for him or not.

'We are generally alone at Maulévrier, my mother and I,' he said; 'I hunt, and shoot, and play the piano, that is all. I do not dislike it, except now and then when I grow restless.'

'And then, I suppose, you try what Tourlyon gaieties will do for you,' said Mr. Mowbray.

'Tourlyon gaieties—ah, no!'

said Gérard. 'I came here to see my brother, and some people—old neighbours—who are living here. Madame, Monsieur Mowbray is making me talk of nothing but myself. May I hope that you and mademoiselle are amusing yourselves well in France?'

'Very well, thank you,' said Mrs. Mowbray. 'We are all fond of travelling, and the best part of it is that one makes pleasant acquaintances.'

'I have never been abroad before,' said Pauline, 'so it is all delightful to me. Have you ever been in England?'

'Never, mademoiselle. I have often wished to go there, but we French people are such terrible stay-at-homes. Once I went with my mother into Spain. One can do that more easily; there is no sea to cross.'

'You don't mean to say you would mind the sea!' exclaimed Mr. Mowbray.

'For myself, no. I was thinking of my mother.'

Gérard hardly knew what he was saying: he was struck with wonder and delight at being addressed by Pauline without hesitation, as if it was quite a natural thing for them to talk together. He had read of English girls in books, but they had not prepared him for this reality; books never do.

Victor had gone out with Léon immediately after dinner, and the Marquis thought he might devote himself for that evening to his new friends. He only just remembered his father, who had died when he was a child; but there was an attraction for him in any one who had known his father; thus Mr. Mowbray's beautiful daughter was not his only claim to Gérard's regard. They all walked together up the street to the cathedral.

The Place Notre Dame was half surrounded with gray old palaces, the Hôtel de Ville, the Palais de Justice; but on the right there was a row of tall houses, where poor people lived. These were partly wooden, partly clothed in overlapping slates. Their roofs went up in curious peaks; the black beams of each nodding gable were all warped and crooked with age; but every window was gay with flowers, and bright-faced women in snowy caps clattered in and out of the low dark shops below. Across the eastern side of the square lay the west front of the cathedral. The sun was sinking behind the turrets of the Hôtel de Ville opposite; the square was in shadow; but a glory of evening light glowed on the rough granite face of the cathedral. The great doorways lay in the shade that was quickly advancing upwards; but the upper half of the two towers, with the rich carving of their façades, the immense rose-window, the rows and groups of statues that stood solemnly in their places, battered and worn with the storms and wars of six or seven hundred years, yet in their old age more grand and beautiful than ever, were still in the full golden sunshine of that June evening. Pauline never forgot her first visit to Tourlyon Cathedral. She and her father and mother and Gérard de Maulévrier walked together across the square, where white and gray doves were flying round the towers above their heads in the quiet air. They passed the little stall of '*objets de piété*,' and went into the great doorway, where in the sudden twilight the poor blind man was sitting, rattling sous in a tin mug. Then into the vastness, silence, and almost darkness of the cathedral.

Pauline had learnt a great deal

from her father about styles of architecture; but she had also learnt from him to look first on the spiritual side of things, to ignore guide-books and measurements, and to trust always to her own impressions. To be sure, he was himself better than most guide-books; for, having spent many years of his younger life abroad, and knowing history perfectly well, he always knew what to look for and find in every town. There was a faint smell of incense hovering among those heavy pillars. Through the west window a flood of coloured light poured in across the church, and, flowing as far as the eastern bays of the choir, lingered on the high altar, the decorations of which glittered like plates of gold. A few women, a priest, a workman or two, were kneeling here and there, especially before the altars in the many side-chapels, with their pictures, and stands of candles, and pots of artificial flowers. The whole thing made a strange impression on an English girl, used to the trim cathedrals of her native country. In this great stately old nave everything seemed so rough and homely; it belonged to the people, this church. There was a wild picturesqueness, a naturalness about it all; even its flimsy decorations seemed as if they had been put there by faithful souls who knew no better.

The choir-gates were locked, and it was too late to see the tombs and treasures of the cathedral. They walked round the side-aisles of the nave, saying little. The Frenchman especially was silent, showing none of the irreverence that Pauline had been told by some people to expect from his nation. When they came out again into the Place Notre

Dame, the shadows had climbed and climbed, till now there was only one touch of gilding sunlight on the top of the southern tower.

'What do you think of it, Pauline?' said her father.

'I don't know, papa; it is like life,' said Pauline.

'Yes, mademoiselle,' said the Marquis earnestly. 'There you see the life of our people. These statesmen of ours, who would take it all away, they are simply killing France, do you see? and it is suicide to kill one's country.'

'Ah! Do you speak so strongly as that?' said Mr. Mowbray. 'Come along, then; let us talk politics, because I don't altogether agree with you.'

'As you please, monsieur; but I hate politics, and know nothing about them,' said Gérard. 'I can only tell you my convictions.'

'And they are that all the old ways are the best?'

'Not at all,' said Gérard, with emphasis.

Mrs. Mowbray and her daughter did not yawn, like M. de Brye's dog, as they listened to the views of this young Royalist; for they, like many other people who get all their knowledge of France from a Paris correspondent or some disinterested person who has travelled about among the large towns, gathering information from lawyers, doctors, manufacturers, and so forth, did not know much of that large silent class which M. de Maulévrier represented. A class which has only to get free of its own and other people's prejudices to be a fit leader for any civilised nation. But true civilisation is still far away, and the reign of the educated is farther still, and seems to retire, instead of advancing, so that the best

among the French are likely to get less and less of their fair share in ruling their country.

CHAPTER VII.

PAULINE'S NEW FRIEND.

PAULINE did not sleep well that night; her dreams were troubled, and she woke early in the morning to listen to the striking hours as they went by, and to the noises in the waking street—heavy wheels rumbling, whips cracking, sabots clattering. She lay awake thinking of the day before, of her father's strange meeting with M. de Maulévrier. She asked herself what made this new acquaintance so different from an Englishman, and, in fact, from every one she had ever met? She thought of him as she had looked at him—frankly, simply, and intently, without any attempt to deceive herself about the interest she felt in him. She was very happy, for she was only a girl, after all. The sweetest little smile was curling her lips as she wondered whether they would see much of him to-day.

She went out before breakfast with her father. They wandered through the old blackened streets, full of life and colour, where people paused in their work, and smiled their admiration of the 'belle Anglaise' as she went by. Here and there a low stone arch carried the street over a quiet little dark stream, which stole along between the backs of tall old houses, their walls stained with every shade of green and brown dampness. The lower half of such a picture would have been dismal enough if the windows had not had flowers in them, with long green tendrils running down to the water; while the

broad bright sunshine flowed down between the nodding roofs, lighting up the dormer windows, with their square black coifs, and the long poles that stuck out of them, where blue blouses and shirts were hanging out to dry.

Further on, Mr. Mowbray and Pauline came out of these narrow streets upon a quiet little quay by the Yonne, not many yards above one of the large bridges, but quite out of the way of traffic. The gardens of private houses ran down to the river here; there were willows hanging over corners of gray wall, and lightly dipping themselves into the clear green water. A great washing was going on. Each garden had its door opening on a little patch of stones by the river's brink, and at almost every one an old woman or a girl was busy beating and rinsing her clothes. By the quay there was a long wooden shed full of women; they knelt in boxes on the green slippery planks, and washed and talked, and made the place ring with laughter.

Mr. Mowbray began to talk to an old woman who was standing by, and several merry-faced girls stopped their work to listen, with eyes fixed on him and Pauline. There was nothing rude or unpleasant in their stare. Pauline was attracted by their sweet bright faces, and went close up to the shed to talk to them; but then they were seized with shyness. They laughed, and set to work again, making great splashes in the water. The air seemed full of sunshine; the laughing voices rippled with the river.

Then the finishing touch was given to the interest of that morning by the sudden appearance of Monsieur de Maulévrier. His brother Victor was with him. Gérard introduced him to his

English acquaintances. Both young men shook hands with Mr. Mowbray, and made low bows to Pauline. The blanchis-senses were forgotten, and they all walked together to the bridge, which brought them to the lower end of the Rue Notre Dame.

Pauline thought that, after all, the difference between French and English gentlemen was not so very great. She walked on in front with Gérard, up the long winding street, while her father followed with Victor. Her companion began asking for her mother, and hoping that she was not too fatigued. Then he explained that he and his brother were engaged to breakfast with some friends, but that he could not let the morning pass without seeing those other friends that he had made so unexpectedly.

Gérard was not a man of much conversation. He could talk to Monsieur and Madame de Brye, when it was his duty and did not interest him; he had also been able to talk last night, when Mr. Mowbray drew him out on politics. He could talk for hours with people who knew and understood him—such as his old tutor, M. Olivier; but with a young Englishwoman, whom he admired hopelessly and beyond expression, the finding of words was a serious difficulty. Pauline hardly realised the impression she had made on this tall Frenchman with his melancholy eyes. There certainly was a charm about him; she felt sorry for him, and supposed he was not used to talking to girls. So she talked to him, looking up with the sweet unconsciousness which other people, before Gérard de Maulévrier, had found irresistible. She told him how they had been walking through the old streets, and making friends with the washerwomen.

‘How cheerful they all look!’ she said. ‘Our poor people at home are not really discontented, I think, but they look so grave about everything. Most of yours seem light-hearted. The women especially have such good faces.’

‘Still, French people are sadder than they used to be,’ said Gérard. ‘But you are right—they are very good, our peasants. They bear their misfortunes well, and struggle on to better times. You do not know many of the French, mademoiselle?’

‘No, very few,’ said Pauline, smiling. ‘I ought not to have any opinion about them yet.’

‘All that you have said is perfectly right,’ answered Gérard. ‘But I was thinking you cannot judge two nations from the same point de vue. Monsieur Mowbray, your father, knows us very well. Why has he never brought you to France before?’

‘He thought I should understand it all better if I did not see it till I was grown up,’ said Pauline. ‘That was one reason. Then we are not at all rich—there are a good many of us—’ she stopped, colouring a little; and then, seeing that he was looking and listening with the deepest interest, she thought she had better go on. ‘I have five brothers and sisters. All that makes it not easy to get away.’

‘Ah! and your brothers are very happy?’ said Gérard, half in the tone of a question.

‘They are like other boys, dear troublesome fellows,’ said Pauline. ‘It is hard work to amuse them on a wet day.’

‘Do you amuse them? They are very fortunate—it ought not to be hard work. I picture to myself an English home as something so cheerful and contented,’ said Gérard. ‘Every one with his own taste; books and music

all over the house ; dogs, horses, children. Are you really so happy, mademoiselle ?

'I think we are very happy, though we don't always know it,' answered Pauline. 'At least—' she stopped herself again, and looked a little grave.

'At least—' he repeated, in a low voice.

'O, nothing ! Are you fond of the sea ?

'I love it very much.'

'Then you would like my home. It is five minutes' walk from the sea, in a hollow of the downs, with fir-trees up above, and such lovely flowers. Things grow there as well as in Devonshire. Myrtles and camellias stay out of doors all the winter.'

'Have you any neighbours ?

'O, yes ; we are close to a town. We look down over it. So of course there are plenty of people. And what is your home like ?

'My home ! It is in a desert. You cannot imagine anything more lonely. An old tumbledown house, standing in the midst of forests, where we hunt the wolf and the wild boar. The nearest town is three leagues off, and we have no neighbours but the peasants. Except the curé ; but you would hardly call him society, though he is a most enlightened man.'

'You and your mother live there alone ?

'Generally. My brothers are not often there.'

'Madame de Maulévrier must be very dull sometimes. Is there no one with her now ?

'No ; she is alone. But she finds a great deal to do. She is very practical, and I have never heard her complain.'

Just then an idea rushed into his mind and took possession of it. Could anything be a more strange and poetical contrast—a

more interesting adventure—than to bring this English girl to visit his mother at Maulévrier ?

'Ah, mademoiselle,' he said, 'could you understand that such a place as Maulévrier is not always sad and desolate ? When the trees are all in leaf, and the birds singing, and the clouds chasing each other across that waving plain of forest—yes, there are days when you would feel a solemn cheerfulness, a satisfaction in being alive ; for, after all, there is as much life in the country as in the town. Or have you a great dread of being far from crowds ?

Something in Pauline answered instantly to his enthusiastic tone. She looked up at him with smiling eyes.

'I believe your home is very beautiful !' she said. 'I don't think I ever saw anything like it.'

'If you would only come and see it, then ! Do not say no at once ! I should have much to show you—and Monsieur and Madame Mowbray. I could give him materials for another book ; we have old stories enough in our family. Would you be very much ennuyée, mademoiselle, with a few days at Maulévrier ?

'I am sure I should enjoy it very much indeed,' said Pauline, and perhaps she looked even more. 'But I don't know—you must settle it with papa.'

'Of course I shall arrange it all. A thousand thanks, mademoiselle. You are too good. You make me the happiest man in the world.'

He certainly looked happy enough, as they stopped at the hotel entrance to wait for the others, who were a few yards behind. He was smiling ; there was colour in his face, and a sort of glow in his eyes, as he stood and looked at her. It seemed as if, in this girl's presence, all his

troubles were forgotten, his melancholy had vanished; he could realise nothing but her. Victor, as he walked up with Mr. Mowbray, stared at his brother, smiled a little, and shrugged his shoulders. None of the others noticed this. Something was said about meeting in the public gardens in the afternoon, where the band of Léon's regiment was to play. Then Pauline and her father turned into the hotel, and the young men put their hats on and walked up the street together.

CHAPTER VIII.

COMPLICATIONS.

VICTOR DE MAULÉVRIER listened quietly to his brother's praises of the English people. He allowed that Mr. Mowbray was intelligent and that his daughter was pretty. But he was unlike most of his countrymen in having no fancy for the English, and he only thought these good specimens of a disagreeable nation.

'You think her *pretty*?' said Gérard rather indignantly. 'She is beautiful!'

'Ah, pardon! that is a great word,' said Victor. 'A bright complexion—she has lived on bread-and-milk—and a pair of fine blue eyes. Her history is written on her face. An amiable, contented young woman—nothing more.'

'Can any one be so blind?' exclaimed Gérard. 'That is all you can see in Mademoiselle Mowbray's face! And indeed, if there was nothing more, what you describe scarcely deserves contempt.'

'Contempt! my dear brother, you quite misunderstand me,' said Victor, perceiving that Gérard was inclined to be angry. 'That ingenuous freshness has no doubt

a beauty of its own. I only say that it does not attract me.'

'Ah, I remember—you do not believe in good women.'

'But certainly, when did I say that?'

Gérard was silent. Presently Victor laughed good-humouredly, and went on,

'I am ready to admire your English ladies, *mon cher*, as much as you please; and as to the father, he is an amusing man, and speaks French well. Do you mean to introduce them to Madame de Brye?'

'Most likely, this afternoon,' said Gérard. 'And there is another thing I mean to do—to ask them to Maulévrier.'

'Indeed!' said Victor, with a little movement of surprised resignation. 'What will our mother say to that? But you know best.'

'She is always glad to see any one who knew our father. And I wish to show them that country, it will be new to them; they have nothing like it in England.'

'England is too small to hold Maulévrier,' said Victor. 'But do you think this plan is the very wisest you could have made? Considering everything—you must forgive me, but I am the most prudent man in France—it seems to me that just now you have a good deal on your hands. There might be complications; I would reflect, if I were you.'

'I don't know what you mean by complications,' said Gérard; 'but all that is too late now. I suggested it to Mademoiselle Mowbray just now, as we walked up the street.'

'Is it possible?' said Victor; 'then I have nothing more to say. When will it be? You will write to my mother, of course.'

'I don't know; next week. She will send the calèche, and I

shall go with them ; you too, I suppose ?

'There will not be room for me,' said Victor. 'Let me see, I shall go on before, and prepare madame for her visitors. Cliquet will let me have a dog-cart, or else I shall go by train.'

'You must not prejudice her against them.'

'Not I : I shall tell her exactly what you say about them. Voilà ! The strongest Anglophile could not do more than that.'

Gérard felt nothing but pleasure at his brother's change of tone. He and Victor had always been good friends, though as different as two young men could be. And now, when his brothers had just given up their rights to him so readily, he felt as if he owed them all something more than ordinary regard.

They arrived in excellent spirits at the house on the boulevard. Mademoiselle de Brye had been dreading this visit, haunted by the talk and the parting of yesterday. She thought Gérard was angry with her, and, with all her indifference to him, the idea was disagreeable. But to her surprise he came in looking happier than she had ever seen him, and in his greeting of herself she saw no sign of his remembering their little quarrel of the day before. This again displeased Françoise, and chilled any small feeling of repentance she might have had. She thought this man was too provoking, one day expecting such great things from her, such absurd exaltations, and looking miserable all the time ; the next, showing no particular interest in her, but full of a new life and brightness that she could not understand. What was to be made of such a fiancé as this ?

Françoise listened with lowered eyelashes as he talked to her

father and mother in the salon after breakfast, and told them of his new English acquaintances. M. de Brye was deeply interested. Madame de Brye looked a little stiff ; she knew no English, and in her mind felt scornful of them. But she listened attentively to all Gérard had to say.

Victor, who had been standing in the window, moved gradually round behind a sofa, till he found himself near Françoise. She was quite aware of this manoeuvre, and welcomed him with a slight, conscious smile. Victor's manner was friendly and admiring ; there was also a shade of sentiment in it, or rather of interest, such as a young man might naturally feel towards his future sister-in-law. Françoise's odd little face softened as he talked to her. It was rather adventurous of him to arrange a private conversation in this way ; however, she was anything but annoyed. Victor talked about meeting in the gardens that afternoon, about Léon's regiment, and then about his own. Then he suddenly went back to old days at the Maison Blanche, asking her if she remembered this and that adventure among squirrels, and chestnuts, and wild flowers.

'I am glad you are coming there this summer,' he said. 'It will be like old times again.'

'Shall you be there?' asked Françoise. 'I do not know about old days. I think I shall die of dismalness. It is true, I never think of those woods without shivering. When one was a child, it was amusing enough. But will not you be gone back to your regiment?'

'Not at first, I hope,' said Victor. 'I must pay a long visit to Maulévrier. To begin with, there will be Gérard's English friends to entertain.'

'Are they going there? I should

like to see them. I have sometimes seen English in Paris, and they always look so odd; they have the air—how shall I say it?—of wearing clothes made for somebody else.'

Madame de Brye had now found out that her daughter and Victor de Maulévrier were chattering together in a corner. So she left the Comte and Gérard to their talk about England, and advanced towards these two. She also liked Victor, who was more comprehensible than his brother to the usual run of minds.

'Well, Monsieur Victor,' said she graciously, 'are you, too, in love with these English ladies?'

'An impossible state of things, madame, as long as I live among French ladies,' answered Victor.

'Ah, I am glad you are so patriotic. Your brother seems quite carried away. And Monsieur Léon—has he lost his heart too?'

'He has not had the honour of being introduced to them. But I think I can answer for Léon's faithfulness,' said Victor. 'You must forgive Gérard, madame. He is something of a poet; and those sort of people have their fancies.'

'I have no fault to find with him,' said Madame de Brye, smiling a little contemptuously. 'Seriously, though, what are these people? Are they noble? Ought one to take any notice of them?'

'Not noble, I think,' said Victor. 'But très-bien. They might very well be somebody in their own country. Their name is Mowbray.'

'Ah, Mowbray! That is not so impossible as many English names,' said Madame de Brye.

Victor considered himself a great philosopher of the Cynic school, if his position was to be defined strictly. Feeling himself

superior to his fellow-mortals, he liked to watch and dissect their motives. The weaknesses of other people were a source of quiet amusement to him. Having always expected, and been prepared for, the arrangement which was to shelve him as a younger brother for life, he took it as a necessary part of life, a disagreeable necessity. Perhaps this shutting up of the gates of ambition was more painful to him than to either of his cheerful young brothers, Léon and Jules, because he had a good deal of worldly cleverness; but no one was likely to find out that Victor ever felt himself wronged.

This afternoon he was amused by Madame de Brye's curiosity about the English ladies. She was dying to see them, that was quite plain, and to know all about them, though she did not choose to ask many questions. Gérard's new enthusiasm interested her much more than it did her daughter, who was painfully indifferent. So Victor thought at first; but, after all, he was not sure. Françoise looked across at Gérard, and he thought that in the glance there was both anger and wounded pride. This was a little beyond Victor's understanding, for he knew nothing of the interview yesterday. Did Fanni like Gérard so much that she was already jealous, and could not bear to hear him praise other women? She was certainly a strange little creature.

Early in the afternoon they all got into a large carriage and drove to the public garden at the other end of the town. There they got out, and, leaving the carriage near the gates, walked slowly through the broad smooth avenues. Two or three fountains were playing; the high jets of water waved against the deep-blue sky like long plumes of the finest silver feathers, and then flew off like

showers of diamonds in the soft wind that was blowing. All about the fountains there were brilliant beds of flowers and tall groups of leafy plants—aloes with their rare white flowers, delicate grasses that rustled and trembled in the air. From this centre branched off high double avenues of elms, with a floor of even gravel, and many seats in the shade. Near the fountains, on a square of shady grass, stood the gaily-painted pavilion where the band played. The garden sloped down southwards to the river and an ornamental bridge, over which crowds of people came flowing all the afternoon; there was room for them all. Several smart carriages, like Madame de Brye's, were drawn up near the gates; ladies in Paris dresses, a good many officers in uniform, and little boys and girls in embroidered garments, were strolling about talking to their friends. The good bourgeoisie of Tourlyon was also largely represented; and all among the smartest gowns and bonnets moved dark-eyed peasant-women in their clean frilled caps—nothing so becoming could have been bought in Paris—with their merry elves of children, and their husbands in black caps and clean blouses.

Monsieur de Brye had to talk to one acquaintance after another. His wife and daughter wandered about in the shade with the two young men, while the band played a spirited battle-march, almost a dancing measure. Madame de Brye, tall and thin, was all wrapped in black silk and lace; she looked distinguished, and waved her large black fan slowly. Françoise was entirely dressed in blue. The colour was not very becoming to her, and made her look paler than usual; but she was not just then particularly discon-

tented. Gérard, perhaps rather conscience-stricken, had taken possession of her that afternoon as he had never done before. He would walk beside her and talk to her; and though she might have found Victor's conversation more amusing, it was impossible not to feel pleased at such attention from Gérard. To-day, too, he was more like other men; he did not sentimentalise, but talked about ordinary things, and laughed pleasantly at his companion's sharp little remarks. Françoise began to think that any one so handsome and well-mannered could not make himself very disagreeable; the fog that veiled her future life began to lift a little. M. de Maulévrier might, of course, be less absent-minded; but that was his natural oddity, which could not be helped. If he would only be cheerful and good-humoured, and not expect impossibilities from his wife, such as being content at Maulévrier, they might, after all, get on tolerably well.

They had been standing in a group under the elm-trees, near the middle fountain, but just out of reach of its spray, with a damp sweet air blowing from it in their faces. Monsieur de Brye was still in request among his friends. Léon had come up to them; he was better looking than Victor, and made a very handsome little officer. Seeing that Gérard and Françoise were busy talking to each other, he followed Victor's example in devoting himself to Madame de Brye, who presently sat down on a bench close by, and was well amused with a talkative young man on each side of her. She was not quite at ease in letting Françoise stand apart with Gérard, though they were only a yard or two away; but none of her acquaintances were in sight at the moment, and she

thought it so very desirable that those two should become friends that she determined to indulge them for once. So they stood there quite à l'Anglaise for a few minutes. What they were talking about it would be difficult to say. Paris, the fashion, the theatres — these were favourite subjects with Françoise, though she knew little enough of them. Gérard knew more in one sense, and less in another. He hated Paris in theory, and thought it the centre of all tyranny and disorder. But he was not prejudiced enough to care to oppose Françoise in her little ravings. He stood with a rather dreamy smile on his face, listening and answering, sometimes looking away with a long searching gaze round the gardens. Françoise wondered once or twice what he was looking for; and then suddenly caught sight of some people on the other side of the great fountain.

'Ah, there they are, your English friends,' she said.

Gérard saw them too. He hesitated a moment.

'May I go to them? Madame de Brye was good enough to say that I might introduce them—'

'O yes, go. I beg you will,' said Françoise, walking back to her mother.

Gérard had no time to think of her as he hurried round the fountain. There was the object of his enthusiasm, with her agreeable parents, coming smiling to meet him. Miss Mowbray's eyes looked bluer than ever that afternoon; she too might, perhaps, feel that this was a happy occasion. After a few minutes, Gérard remembered to tell Mrs. Mowbray that some friends of his were most anxious to make her acquaintance.

'They have a house here,' he explained; 'but they are old

friends and neighbours of my family. We are very intimate with them. We shall find them under the trees yonder.'

Madame de Brye, however, was polite enough to meet them half-way. As soon as she saw the party, pointed out to her by Françoise, coming in her direction, she got up and went towards them, followed by her daughter, the two young Maulévriers, and Monsieur de Brye, who had just rejoined his family. So French and English met in the very middle of the garden, observed by Tourlyon eyes, to which, well dressed as they were, the foreigners appeared as something outlandish.

Pauline has often thought since of that meeting under the blue sky in the gardens, the band playing a wild waltz that filled all the air, Gérard de Maulévrier, with his courteous eager manner, presenting her and her people to the Comte and Comtesse de Brye, Mademoiselle de Brye, his brother, the Vicomte de Maulévrier. The gentlemen's low formal bows, the deep inclinations of the ladies, her father smiling with his hat off, and taking the limp fingers that Monsieur de Brye offered him. Pauline at once decided that she liked M. de Brye the best of the family. The ladies looked stiff; the girl in blue, with her faded complexion and peculiar eyes, gazed with a curious scrutiny which did not quite fit in with Pauline's ideas of French politeness.

But this was only at the first moment. They were all very pleasant afterwards. The four ladies sat down under the trees, with the three young men in attendance. M. de Brye took Mr. Mowbray away to show him some of the rare plants and shrubs in the garden. Pauline thought how odd it would be in England

to find herself sitting quite silent beside her mother, like the French girl at the other end of the bench. Madame de Brye gave her whole attention to Mrs. Mowbray, and asked her all sorts of funny little questions about life in England, showing the greatest surprise at her answers. Gérard and his brothers seemed to think that it was their duty to listen. Françoise also listened, nodding and lifting her eyebrows now and then. She evidently thought life in England a very grotesque affair.

Things grew more lively when M. de Brye and Mr. Mowbray came back. The Comte was full of jokes and compliments; and some spirited talk went on between the four elders, the younger people still listening meekly. Pauline grew a little tired of the silent neighbourhood of Léon, who stood quite near her, but did not attempt to speak, or even to look at her. He was either afraid or indifferent. He seemed absorbed in listening to M. de Brye's amusing speeches. Sometimes he laughed to himself, suddenly showing white teeth under his dark moustache, and looked at his brothers; but Miss Mowbray might not have been there at all for any notice he took of her. She thought the manners of young Frenchmen—except, of course, M. le Marquis—might easily be improved. On the whole, she was not very sorry when they all got up, Léon made his bow and vanished, and the De Brye party, with Gérard and Victor, walked away to their carriage, Gérard first saying to Mr. Mowbray, 'I shall see you this evening,' and taking leave of his English friends with a smile that made up for other people's deficiencies.

In the next few days they saw a good deal of Monsieur and Madame de Brye, who, finding

that they gave great pleasure to Gérard by attention to his father's old acquaintance, and seeing that the Mowbrays themselves were quite *comme-il-faut*, gave up their usual exclusiveness, and were very civil to them. As a general rule, foreign travellers might as easily have been received on intimate terms in a convent of cloistered nuns as in a house like M. de Brye's. Mr. Mowbray thought it all great fun: he liked foreigners and their ways. His wife was not quite so much enchanted. She neither cared for Madame de Brye nor her daughter, and she did not assent very heartily to her husband's remark that it was a capital thing for Pauline to see something of good French society.

'It can't do Pauline much good to be with a girl like Mademoiselle de Brye,' she said. 'They have not two ideas alike, or a word to say to each other. They have been brought up so differently, for which one is thankful.'

'If they never speak to each other there is no great harm done,' said Mr. Mowbray. 'But that is a new feature in Polly. I thought she could always talk to everybody.'

'And there are all those young men about the house every day,' his wife went on. 'However—see what it is to live in a free country—I don't believe they even dare to tell themselves that Pauline is pretty—a fortunate thing too, for what would aunt Lucia say?'

'Except the Marquis: he admires her uncommonly,' said Mr. Mowbray. 'As a beautiful picture, you know. Don't alarm yourself in the least: nothing else is possible. His mother will find the right wife for him. He is far too good a fellow to strike out for himself.'

'Dear me, how miserable! Not

that I wish it, of course, though he is charming. You don't really mean, *Géorge*, that we are going to *Maulévrier*?

'After *Madame de Maulévrier*'s civil letter I don't see how we can refuse. Don't set yourself against it. *Polly* and I are the majority: we shall carry it. She wants to go as much as I do. That will be a glimpse of French life, if you like. This is nothing to it.'

'I hope no harm will come of it. I have a little presentiment,' said *Mrs. Mowbray*.

'Nonsense! You are afraid of the *Marquis*. I tell you, you may trust a Frenchman to make a prudent arrangement. I wish he was capable of something rash. I should like him still better than I do.'

'I hope you are right. At any rate, I trust *Pauline*. She takes a great interest in him, though, *George*.'

'Why, you'll drive me mad. What in the world has brought you into this nervous state?'

'I am not nervous; but one can't help thinking—'

'Don't think. Enjoy yourself. I would never have come to France if I had known you were going to think. I tell you, as to *Gérard de Maulévrier*, the thing is impossible — unnatural — it couldn't happen if it tried. Are you satisfied now?'

'O, certainly,' answered *Mrs. Mowbray*; and she said no more.

From all this, which was said when they had been a few days at *Tourlyon*, it is plain that they had not discovered *Gérard*'s engagement to *Françoise de Brye*—a curious comment on arrangements of the kind.

CHAPTER IX.

AMONG THE ORANGE-TREES.

PAULINE and her mother were used to *Mr. Mowbray*'s enthusiasms. He was always discovering hidden geniuses—people who bore out some theory of his, and had never been understood before. He was a happy man, who did not know what it was to be bored. Life to him was a chain of interests, to which new links were added constantly. When he wrote that book of Revolution sketches, France was everything, and the *Marquis de Maulévrier* had been more than a pleasant helpful acquaintance; he had been to *Mr. Mowbray* a typical Frenchman of the grand old régime. *Gérard*, like and yet unlike his father, interested the Englishman very much in the same way, and was, in his turn, strongly attracted by him. Together they poked about among the old china, glass, and armour of the *Tourlyon Musée*, studied the manuscripts in the library, traced year by year the history of the cathedral in its timeworn stones. There were strange stories connected with some of the old houses in the town, and the *Couronne* especially had its traditions, preserved in the *Cliquet* family, which had always been *bien-pensante*, though it had grown up in the ruined nest of nobles. The pictures in the dining-room had hung there for more than a hundred years. The hunting and battle scenes had been painted for old counts and barons, while they themselves, in red coats and powder, with faded faces and solemn eyes, still sat looking out of their frames with the grand air that had belonged to them in life. There were ladies in court dresses, too, with fans in their hands, smiling out

of a cloud of curls and feathers. One of these was quite different from the others. She was dressed in a green riding-coat, what people used to call a 'joseph,' and carried her large beaver hat and whip in her hand. Her face was not French; there was a certain squareness about it, an almost German breadth of forehead, large blue eyes, and a grave sweet smile; altogether she was without the coquettish air of her companions. The picture was better painted than most of them; there was a charming naturalness about it. Monsieur Cliquet had hung it in the best light there was, in the place of honour at the end of the room.

There came a Sunday which was to be the Mowbrays' last day at Tourlyon. They went to high mass at the cathedral, and there saw Gérard de Maulévrier with his friends the Bryes. Afterwards he joined them, and walked back with them to breakfast at the hotel. He and Pauline had seen a good deal of each other through that week, but in a quite formal way. There had been no more friendly talks and confidences. It was Mr. Mowbray's society that Gérard seemed to like best. It crossed Pauline's mind once or twice that Gérard, like his brother, was half inclined to avoid her; he addressed her so very rarely after that first day, and in such a stiffly polite manner. She thought about this more than she would have cared to confess, remembering the looks and words with which he had asked her to come to Maulévrier. But at any rate, he had not repented of that invitation; he had pressed it earnestly on Mr. and Mrs. Mowbray, and had written to his mother, who had seconded him by a wonderfully polite letter to Mrs. Mow-

bray. The idea of this visit charmed Pauline more than any one knew. She woke every morning with the feeling that something was before her, something mysterious, interesting, unusual, a new experience of life, to which all the sights in Europe would be nothing. Days spent in an old French château, away in the woods—what would they be? how would the hours pass? Days with Gérard de Maulévrier for host—surely he and she would have more talk then! She longed to know more about him—how he lived at home, what it was that gave him that trick of melancholy.

After breakfast that Sunday, the other people having gone out, they were looking at the pictures. Monsieur Cliquet had come in, delighted to give them any information they wanted. They were standing before the blue-eyed lady in the josph.

'If you ever change your mind about selling that picture, you will let me know?' M. de Maulévrier said to the landlord.

'Certainly, Monsieur le Marquis. I am desolated to refuse you. Circumstances *might*—but I consider that picture the gem of my collection.'

'You are right there,' said Mr. Mowbray. 'Who was she?'

'She was the last Comtesse du Loir,' said Gérard. 'They murdered her—she was guillotined. I believe she was descended from English people—her grandmother was English. Her mother was a Maulévrier, one of our family. That connects us with the Comtes du Loir, do you see, and I consider all these family pictures, especially that one. But Monsieur Cliquet does not admit my claim.'

'Bien! there is a great deal in it,' the friendly Cliquet acknowledged, with a smiling bow. 'But

it was only the day before yesterday that Monsieur le Marquis suggested it, and I have hardly had time to think. It would be a sad thing for my wife and me, messieurs et mesdames, to have our pretty *salle-à-manger* suddenly unfurnished.'

'But, my dear Monsieur Cliquet,' exclaimed Gérard, 'I am neither rich nor inconsiderate enough to ask for all your pictures. It is only that one, which I think beautiful.'

'I understand, monsieur. And is it not a strange thing how that portrait resembles mademoiselle!'

Little Cliquet bowed to Pauline, and waved his hand towards the Comtesse du Loir. His eyes were twinkling, but nobody looked at him, so that did not matter. Gérard coloured slightly.

'Yes,' he said, and turned to examine a hunting piece that hung close by.

'It is the same type of face,' said Mr. Mowbray. 'The English extraction, I suppose.'

Mrs. Mowbray, who was looking at the Marquis, saw his change of colour, and the almost awkward manner in which he turned away. She thought him an odd young fellow, and hoped Pauline had noticed nothing. She also wished, for the twentieth time, that they were not going to Maulévrier, and debated in her own mind whether it would be well to give Pauline a word of warning. But no, she decided; it was better not to put things into a girl's head, especially a frank simple girl like Pauline. It would spoil her pleasure, and do no good.

That evening they dined at Madame de Brye's. Gérard and Léon de Maulévrier were there; Victor had gone home as he proposed. Gérard took Pauline in to dinner, but their friendship did not proceed any further, for he

was grave and abstracted, and when he did talk, joined in the general conversation. A week ago Pauline would have made him talk to her, but something in his manner perplexed her now, and gave her a little feeling of constraint. She was also oppressed by Mademoiselle de Brye, in whose eyes there was a sort of unfriendly, questioning criticism. Some girls in her own country had been known to dislike Pauline; but she never troubled herself about them. These circumstances seemed in some way to be quite different. Why should this French girl look at her so? A certain consciousness tormented Pauline. She wanted to like all the French, to make them like her, and in Mademoiselle de Brye's eyes there was something impenetrable, a suspicion, a watchfulness, that could never be quieted.

Meanwhile, M. de Brye was laughing and joking and entertaining Mrs. Mowbray; Madame de Brye was listening politely to Mr. Mowbray, and answering him with shrugs and smiles; Léon was staring about him, and joining in with a quiet laugh now and then. Pauline, under the shadow of her neighbour's abstraction, thought it all rather tiresome, and was glad when they got up; Gérard gave her his arm again, and they crossed the hall to the salon, where the talk went on in a more scattered way.

The coffee-table was carried in. Gérard brought Pauline her cup; she looked up as she took it, and smiled at him. 'What are you so dismal about?' her sweet eyes seemed to say. He smiled too, but very sadly. 'Ah, if I could tell you!' his answering look may have meant. It was hardly satisfactory; things were not exactly brightened by this stolen exchange of glances; yet Pauline

felt herself suddenly so much happier, that she was obliged to look down into her coffee. Gérard stood there a moment longer without speaking, and then walked across the room.

After the gentlemen had gone to smoke, the ladies strolled out into the garden. Pauline presently found herself sitting among the orange-trees with Mademoiselle de Brye, who seemed to her to have purposely lingered behind the others, that they might have a little talk by themselves. She was surprised, for Françoise had always rather avoided her. But sitting in that scented corner of the garden, under a golden sky, with long late sun-rays falling in among the trees and flowers, the cheerful music of the patrol sounding up and down the distant streets, and the thought in her mind that this time to-morrow she would be at Maulévrier, Pauline did not care much what happened to her now. If her thoughts about Mademoiselle de Brye had taken any shape, it would have been indifference. What could matter less to her than this girl and her doings?

'So you are going to Maulévrier to-morrow, mademoiselle,' said Françoise, fixing her eyes on the fair English face. 'Are you glad? Are you looking forward to it very much?'

'Yes, very much,' said Pauline. 'You know it well, don't you? Is it not a beautiful old place?'

'M. de Maulévrier thinks it so, I believe. You will judge for yourself. As for me, I always found it as sad, as melancholy—as himself, one might say.'

Pauline felt angry. What business had this girl to speak in such a tone of Gérard?

'People who like him may like his house, then, I suppose,' she

said. 'Have you been there lately?'

'Never since I was a child. But I don't change in those things. To be sure, I used to like the woods then, and our house in the midst of them—a funny place, which no doubt you will see. But then I used to play with the Maulévrier boys, and it was for their sake I liked it all. I am sorry to be grown up,' said Françoise, with a little sigh.

'Did you play with the Marquis?'

'No, he was too old and grand. With his brothers Victor and Léon, and little Jules too, the youngest, such a pretty boy. He is in the navy. Which do you like best of the three you have seen?'

'The Marquis. I hardly know the others. And you?'

'Me! What a droll question! I do not think I can answer it,' said Françoise. She pressed her fan against her lips, and looked at Pauline over it with a smile. 'And you, mademoiselle—pardon me for asking, but English people are so interesting, their ways are so different from ours—it is really true, is it, that madame your mother has not arranged a marriage for you? In her own mind, surely—eh?'

Pauline was inclined to laugh, and yet she felt a vague uneasiness.

'No,' she said, 'my mother has not arranged a marriage for me, and I don't think she ever will. Who told you anything about it?'

'My mother was curious and asked Madame Mowbray. There is nothing surprising in that, is there? People as beautiful as you generally marry very young; and if they do in France, surely they must in England, where you do not trouble yourselves so much about the "dot." You see, I know something of your cus-

toma. Mon Dieu! I would give a great deal to be beautiful like you.'

'What strange things you say!' said Pauline.

'O, not at all! It is only the truth. I should get my own way perhaps, if I had a pretty complexion and eyes as blue as the sea. I should say, "I will not live in that—" Well, it is no use complaining and wishing; only—pardon—do you put anything on your face to give it that soft look?'

Pauline felt herself half-repelled, half-attracted by this strange little being who was gazing at her so earnestly. Françoise laid her small, thin, brown hand, with its long pointed nails, beside the prettily dimpled white one.

'Your hands, too!' she said. 'No soap in the world would make mine that colour.'

'I suppose I must say it is all natural,' said Pauline, laughing. 'At any rate, I use nothing more uncommon than cold water.'

'Ah, how unfair! Now you must ask me some questions. I was determined to talk to you a little before you went away, though I know mamma thinks English people rather dangerous, especially Protestants. But I think some Protestants may possibly go to heaven—you will, certainly—"les yeux bleus vont aux cieux." What colour are my eyes, do you think? Not green, I hope; for that is a very bad fate. But I never can make up my mind about them.'

'Your eyes change colour; that is the prettiest thing of all, as we are paying compliments,' said Pauline. 'But I think they are gray.'

'Ah, well, that is not so bad—"Paradis." And Gérard de Maulévrier's?'

'Black, are they? I really don't know.'

'He will be in purgatory, then, and he will deserve it, for looking so miserable on earth. And you like him; you are glad to be going to his house—is it possible? And you are not afraid of Madame de Maulévrier?'

'Why should I be afraid of her? Is she disagreeable?'

'Ah, mon Dieu! I dare not say what I think of her. And the worst of it is that he worships her, and means to live with her all his days. She has certainly done her best for him. She has made her other sons renounce their succession, that he may be able to marry and live at that dreadful old place. He *means* to live there; but we shall see.'

'I suppose it depends on his wife,' said Pauline. 'If she is good enough for him she will do anything to make him happy.'

'And if she is not good enough for him—as that is your idea—'

Françoise bent forward, with an odd, curious expression, and gazed into her companion's face. Pauline returned her gaze steadily. Whatever feeling might have stirred in the depths of her soul, it was not likely to be betrayed to this girl.

'Then it will be a great pity,' she said; 'and I shall be sorry for them both.'

'Especially for him?'

'Yes; especially for him.'

'I knew it,' said Françoise under her breath. 'Certainly it is a pity; because, do you see, made-moiselle, it is me—wicked me. What do you say now?'

'You! I don't quite understand,' said Pauline, bewildered, not unnaturally, by her recollections of the few past days.

Françoise shrugged her shoulders.

'You had not guessed it? she

said. 'Yes, it has been arranged for us. The estates run into each other, you know, Maulévrier and the Maison Blanche. So we must make the best of it. I don't think he will be difficult to live with. I shall not die, unless it is of ennui.'

Plain-spoken as Françoise was, Pauline did not feel that she could put any of her thoughts into words in return.

'I am very much surprised,' she said. 'No, I had not guessed it. I hope you will be happier than you think.'

Steps and voices were coming nearer. Françoise heard them, if her companion did not.

'Listen,' she said. 'I have told you a secret, because things

are not formally settled yet; and I was forbidden to mention it to anybody. May I trust you to keep my secret? Every one will know soon enough.'

'I will tell no one,' answered Pauline—'except my mother,' suddenly and earnestly. 'I may tell her, may I not?'

Françoise had only time for an assenting look, for Gérard, tall against the golden twilight, came strolling up, and stood bareheaded before them.

'We shall soon be able to see the glowworms,' he said. 'Will you come and look for them on the terrace, mesdemoiselles?'

So, among orange-blossoms and other strange foreign things, ended this Sunday at Tourlyon.

(To be continued.)

INJUSTICE : A FEMININE POUT.

WHEN Di put dandelions in her hair,
He called them lovely, that I can declare;
But when I tried them, sure of admiration,
He called my wreath a 'floral aberration.'

Di uses slang; he doesn't try to stop her,
But says it's very taking, though improper;
I ventured 'Hang it!' To my great surprise,
Quoth he, 'You'll say "How vexing!" if you're wise.'

She smoked his pipe—a common ugly clay:
He vowed its value dated from that day;
I volunteered a puff, but that was wrong—
'For you,' he said, 'my bird's eye's rather strong.'

Di wears a scarlet Jersey. I, less daring,
Chose a dull crimson, thinking red too staring;
Hers he pronounces killing—who'd have thought it?
Mine simply harmless. How I wish she'd bought it!

I talk and laugh, and work quite hard to please:
Di, coolly nonchalant, just takes her ease;
And yet I often think I'm scarcely heard,
He looks so much at her. It's quite absurd!

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DINING.

THAT very celebrated epicure the President Hénault, after partaking of an unusually bad dinner at his old friend Madame du Deffand's, remarked to his hostess that in his opinion the only difference between her cook and the notorious Marquise de Brinvilliers was that the former poisoned people involuntarily, and the latter intentionally. Without going so far as to insinuate—as the irate *gourmet* no doubt mentally did—that the offending *gâte-sauce* merited a similar fate to that experienced by the accomplice of St. Croix, or even unrestrictedly approving the prodigality of Mark Antony, who, M. de Custine tells us, rewarded the tutelary genius of his kitchen for some unprecedented triumph of his skill by conferring on him the gift of a town, we nevertheless venture to plead guilty to the amiable weakness of appreciating a good dinner, and of entertaining a kindly remembrance of the artist to whom we are indebted for it.

If there be any truth in the saying, 'Practice makes perfect,' no country in the world ought to have attained a greater proficiency in the science of dinner-giving than our own; for we literally do nothing without it. Whatever distinction we may wish to confer on any one supposed to be entitled to it, invariably takes the form of our favourite specialty—a custom resorted to as naturally as if the individual thus honoured had been in an acknowledged state of starvation, and stood in absolute need of an immediate introduction to the flesh-pots of

Egypt. When our soldiers return victorious from the wars, the first impulse that thrills the heart of every true Briton is to organise a dinner for them; when a popular actor retires from the stage, the enthusiasm of his admirers imperatively demands a similar recognition of his services, thereby entailing a vast amount of speechifying, not to mention insufficient oxygen and possible indigestion. Even our ministers, at the close of each parliamentary session, are unable to separate without indulging in the orthodox luxury of apocryphal whitebait—the delicacy in question at that advanced period of the year being necessarily represented, according to the theory of Albert Smith, by tittlebats and minnows. In short, whatever excuse, legitimate or otherwise, can be invented for the gathering together of kindred spirits, whose ideas of sociability are limited to a crowded room and an infinity of courses, is regarded as a sufficient reason for a general distribution of circulars, announcing that on such an occasion Lord So-and-so has kindly promised to take the chair, followed by an imposing list of more or less eminent personages who have also consented to officiate as stewards.

Dinners of this kind, however, are not to everybody's taste, although when the motive is a charitable one a little discomfort may be cheerfully submitted to; nor have we any especial predilection for those solemn and ceremonious banquets, the 'Persicos apparatus' abhorred by Horace,

where the attention due to the company is looked upon as subordinate to the love of display, and conversational geniality is a thing unknown. Few people, even in this dinner-giving age, know how to make their guests feel thoroughly at home by a preparatory study of their social requirements; in nine cases out of ten the names of those destined to be honoured with an invitation are chosen, if not quite at random from the hostess's visiting list, at least without that discriminating tact in the selection which alone can insure an agreeable and harmonious *ensemble*. It is essential that they should move in the same circle of society, and, if possible, be already acquainted with each other; for then all is plain sailing, and the uphill game of explaining allusions to current topics, which half of those present understand and the other half do not, becomes fortunately unnecessary. A dinner *en petit comité*, where the number of guests does not exceed twelve at most, is in our opinion infinitely preferable to a miscellaneous gathering of incongruous elements, collected together for the sole purpose of filling up the table, and killing as many birds as possible with one stone; the latter too frequent custom being not only an inevitable bar to sociability, but rendering, as a matter of course, general conversation impracticable.

We take it for granted that the Amphitryon's *chef* and cellar are unexceptionable, and that his dinners have nothing in common with those deplorable exhibitions of culinary incapacity where the *entrées* arrive lukewarm from the pastrycook's, and a vintage of home manufacture is unblushingly substituted for Château Yquem. It needs but little ex-

perience of second-rate London life to recognise the sham butler engaged for the evening on the usual terms of three half-crowns and his supper, and to divine that the red-handed individual with the slovenly necktie, who has just handed you an inscrutable dish with an unpronounceable name, is no other than the greengrocer round the corner. A glance at the anxious face of the hostess, as she uneasily watches the progress of the repast, and is evidently uncertain whether the ice-pudding (from the pastrycook's) will 'go round' or not, tells its own tale; and you may rest assured that, when the ladies have retired, the next move of your entertainer will be to produce some much-vaunted specimen of apocryphal Léoville or Château Margaux, expressly imported, as he will take care to inform you, for his own particular drinking. Far be it from us, however, to confound these Barmecidal pitfalls—for as such every one blessed with a proper regard for his digestion must needs consider them—with the simple and wholesome meal served up without pretension by a neat-handed Phyllis, and rendered still more palatable by the hearty welcome of a hospitable, albeit perhaps unfashionable, friend. When we read of the dinner given by that briefless wag Gray to Cresus Goldmore, do not our mouths water at the thought of the chops hissing hot from the gridiron, washed down by the cool frothy porter, and followed by the delicious roly-poly and the port 'fit for the gills of a bishop'? And did not the great millionaire, when he had leisure to reflect on it, acknowledge, as well he might, that he had enjoyed 'a monsoons good dinnah,' upon his 'ward'? Even those most devoted to the pleasures of

the table, in whose opinion, as Brillat-Savarin pithily expresses it, the invention of a new dish is of more importance to the human race than the discovery of a planet—even they are not disinclined occasionally to indulge in more homely fare; for is it not recorded that the most fastidious epicures of their day, insensible for the nonce to the delicacies provided for them by an incomparable *chef*, with one accord deserted them for the attractive novelty of a plain boiled leg of pork and peas-pudding?

'Quot homines tot sententiæ,' says the proverb, a maxim as indubitably applicable to things edible as to others. We are informed, on the credible authority of the Marquis of Steyne, that the 'first gentleman in Europe,' at all events on one occasion, did not disdain to partake of that excellent, but eminently *bourgeois*, refection which, under the imposing name of 'swarry,' subsequently found favour in the eyes of the footmen of Bath, to wit, boiled mutton and turnips; and Moore relates that Byron, when invited to dine with Rogers, after successively declining to taste either meat, fish, or wine, and asking for biscuits and soda-water, of which there happened to be no provision, 'professed to be equally well pleased with potatoes and vinegar; and of these meagre materials contrived to make rather a hearty meal.' Lamartine, during the latter years of his life, was, we believe, a strict vegetarian; Mathews the elder, on the contrary, openly proclaimed his carnivorous propensities, as may be seen from the following passage in a letter which has escaped the notice of his biographer: 'I am a butcher's-meat man, and seldom eat of more than one joint, without pastry and all the etce-

teras that are usually required after dinner. I am not *superficial* enough to require soup or fish. I like beef or mutton; but, as I am asked for an opinion, I think it bad taste to roast a leg of mutton.'

'Punctuality,' says Brillat-Savarin, 'on the part of the cook is an indispensable quality; it should be the same on the part of the guest.' Our modern habits, unfortunately, do not admit of this admirable precept being carried out, inexactitude in responding to a dinner invitation being not the exception, but the general rule. To this most indefensible but universally prevalent custom we are indebted for that melancholy vacuum, the half-hour ordinarily prolonged to three quarters before dinner, when people drop in at uncertain intervals, exchange a few indifferent remarks about the weather, and mentally anathematise the still more unpunctual offenders, whose tardy arrival—a minute or two later than their own—they regard as an unwarrantable pretension. It is an understood thing that we are asked at one hour, and expected to come at another, the half-past seven or quarter before eight (as the case may be) inscribed on the card of invitation being merely a pleasant fiction, by which nobody is taken in; even the cook, whose artistic efforts might otherwise be seriously compromised by the delay, being perfectly aware of this social eccentricity, and taking care never to 'dish up' until the last comer has been duly ushered into the drawing-room.

It not unfrequently happens that by some unforeseen mischance the number of guests invited may have been unexpectedly reduced to thirteen, a calamity which, in deference to popular prejudice, demands an immediate remedy.

In France, under similar circumstances, the semi-professional 'quatorzième' would serve the purpose; but this particular specialty not having yet been naturalised with us, recourse is generally had to one of those convenient stoppages not inappropriately designated 'eleventh-hour men.' The individuals selected for this office are mostly those who, although holding a recognised position in society, and frequenting the best houses, are notoriously impecunious, and therefore only too ready to exchange the monotony of the club-joint for a more varied and succulent repast; moreover, with them no ceremony is necessary, and if one fails there are plenty of others to choose from. By this means the void is at once filled up, and no one, except the parties concerned, is aware of the substitution; indeed, it often turns out that the improvised guest exerts his conversational powers as an 'agreeable rattle' with such signal success as to become the acknowledged life and soul of the company. And here it may be well to note an error into which inexperienced dinner-givers are apt occasionally to fall, namely, by inviting two shining lights, in the shape of rival beauties or clever talkers, to meet each other; the inevitable result of so grievous a mistake being that in the former case neither lady is satisfied with the divided homage of her surroundings, and is consequently

out of temper; and in the latter that, in their anxiety to listen to and mentally criticise every word uttered by their adversary, both wits become positive dullards.

It has often been asserted, and in our opinion correctly, that nowhere are people in general, and Englishmen in particular, so completely at their ease, and so thoroughly disposed to be on good terms with their fellow-creatures, as at the dinner-table. By common consent, as it were, they lay aside for the time being their habitual reserve of tone and manner, and abandon themselves wholly to the gratification of their sociable or epicurean proclivities. It is difficult to resist the combined attractions of an agreeable neighbour and an irreproachable *cuisine*; and when both are at his command, a man may be pardoned for yielding to the soft impeachment, and cordially acquiescing in the soundness of the Horatian precept, 'Carpe diem.' Nay, if philosophically inclined, and inspired by a proper feeling of gratitude towards the accomplished caterer for his gastronomic enjoyment, he may perhaps come to the conclusion that Mark Antony's liberality was, on the whole, not only excusable, but justifiable; and will certainly appreciate as it deserves the touching tribute inscribed by his admirers on the tomb of an illustrious professor of the philanthropic science, 'His whole life was consecrated to the useful arts.'

CHARLES HERVEY.

THE OLD BOOKSTALL.

A Treatise on Old Maids.

'A Philosophical, Historical, and Moral Essay on Old Maids. By a Friend of the Sisterhood. In three volumes. Printed for T. Cadell, in the Strand. 1785.' That was the announcement which caught my eye in the catalogue of 'rare and curious books' which I received from a well-known bookseller in the Midlands, a month or two ago. Not a very inviting title perhaps, at first sight; but a note appended by the cataloguist whetted my curiosity. Besides, who could the daring author be who had the courage to send out three volumes on the subject of Old Maids? Whoever he were, it was obvious that the public had appreciated his work, had bought and read it with something approaching to avidity; for I found, on further reference, that the book had run through two editions in the course of a year, and had been translated into German; further, that a third and fourth edition had been called for and issued within nine years of the first appearance of the work. Now that I have satisfied my curiosity and read the three volumes through, I am not surprised at the popularity of the treatise, despite its ponderous title. In those days authors did not go out of their way to invent catchpenny titles, and the reading public had too much good sense to require such undignified fillips to their literary curiosity. This three-volume 'essay' is as amusing a production as I have read for many a long day, full of quaint

learning humorously applied, of racy anecdotes and clever sketches of character. The subject is treated of under six headings: I. 'On the Particular Failings of Old Maids;' II. 'On the Particular Good Qualities of Old Maids;' III. 'On Old Maids in Ancient History;' IV. 'On Old Maids after the Christian Era;' V. 'On Christian and other Modern Old Maids;' VI. 'Containing Miscellaneous Matter.' The author, of whom more anon—for though the book was published anonymously, I have discovered his identity—the author, at the outset, faces, with an equal amount of courage and prudence, the most formidable difficulty in his path, the question, namely, 'What constitutes an Old Maid?' 'I was on the point,' he says, 'of defining an Old Maid to be an unmarried woman who has completed her fortieth year. Though idle witlings might have carped at my definition, as too loose to be strictly philosophical, I am convinced that every sober reader would have found it sufficiently precise for our present purpose.' But this precise definition he was compelled to abandon. 'In conversing with people of all ages, particularly of the female sex, I perceived they had very unsettled and discordant notions of this era which I hoped they would enable me to ascertain. The misses of twenty considered all their unmarried friends who had passed their thirtieth year as absolute Old Maids; those of thirty sup-

posed the era to commence at about *forty-five*; and some ladies of *fifty* convinced me how differently they thought upon the subject, by calling others, about three or four years younger than themselves, by the infantine appellation of *girls*; from whence I presumed they would advance the era I speak of to the age of sixty at least.' In this dilemma he is obliged to modify his definition, and state it in this somewhat vague form: 'At the age, then, when ladies *allow* themselves to be forty, I desire my fair and single friends to consider themselves as standing, if not within the gates, at least upon the threshold of that community of which I treat.' His object, he declares, is purely philanthropic. He devotes himself to redressing 'all the wrongs of the autumnal maiden, and placing her, if possible, in a state of honour, content, and comfort.' After taking a general survey of 'the various neglect and honour which appears to have been the lot of Old Maids in different ages of the world,' and examining the present condition of the sisterhood, he 'proposes to conclude with topics of consolation and advice.' It is not my intention, of course, to follow the learned and ingenious writer through all the intricate course of his treatise, but just extract a few amusing passages as specimens of the general style and tenor of the book. That he is no mere honey-tongued apologist for the sisterhood whom, with a generous quixotism, he seeks to defend, is apparent from the tone which, in his very first chapter, he adopts towards those acrimonious Old Maids who 'are proud of declaring that they regard the condition of an Old Maid as the most comfortable in human life. It is the condition of their choice, and what every wise woman would choose. I

always look,' he goes on to say, 'upon such declarations as a kind of ill-constructed rampart raised very hastily by mistaken pride to defend an uneasy situation. . . . The Old Maid who affirms that she never wished to marry pronounces the severest of satires against her own heart. How utterly devoid of tenderness and of every amiable sensation must that female be who never felt at any period of her life a desire to engage in the duties or to share the delights of that state to which all human beings are invited by the voice of Nature and reason!' Whether all single ladies will indorse that sentiment or not I cannot tell; but the happiest and most contented Old Maids I have ever met have certainly been women who would have made excellent mothers and wives, and prove the fact by the unaffected delight they take in contemplating the domestic joys of their married sisters. But let me pass on to the author's treatment of some other failings of Old Maids. Curiosity he was, of course, bound to animadvert upon; and to show how ridiculous it makes them in the eyes of the other sex, he tells the following anecdote:

'I knew a sprightly gentleman, who, living in a country town, and having been long pestered by his opposite neighbours, two maidenly gentlewomen of the most inquisitive spirit, contrived to render a provoking nuisance an eternal fund of entertainment. At first, indeed, they teased him so much, by their constant practice of peeping and prying into every minute article of his domestic concerns, that although he was naturally mild and benevolent, his temper was materially injured, and he could hardly mention his neighbours without uttering a vehement exclamation against

their impertinence. But at length he began to speculate on the nature and the force of that inordinate passion which could impel two rational creatures, in the decline of life, to exert such indefatigable activity for the most trivial purposes. He diverted himself in framing a thousand little devices to try the full extent of this frivolous curiosity; and the avidity of their desire to know everything which passed in his house, and the history of every individual who entered it, furnished him with the opportunity of putting their curiosity to innumerable trials. A particular account of these devices and their success would form too large an episode for this work; I shall mention, therefore, only one of his manœuvres, which afforded him his most capital sport, and which he distinguished by the whimsical phrase of *Angling for Old Maids at Midnight*. As this, I believe, is a species of fishing not mentioned in the *Complete Angler*, or in any of our elaborate treatises on that amusing art, it will require a full explanation. Such, then, was the invention of my friend in his newly-invented diversion: Soon after the clock had struck twelve, he muffled up his person in some dark disguise, and, sallying from a postern-gate which opened into a different street, he proceeded to the front door of his own house, and knocked with a very audible rap. His opposite old inquirers were induced by their infirmities to go early to bed; but, as curiosity seldom sleeps very sound, the hope of a nocturnal discovery never failed to bring either one or both to the window. If they were tolerably well they ventured to throw up the sash, and to thrust their two sharp visages into the street as far as they could with safety be stretched; for they

were both too keen to trust the relation of each other, and panted with equal eagerness for ocular acquaintance with the object which excited their curiosity. This, however, they could never perfectly attain; their frolicsome neighbour, though a large lamp was burning before his door, contrived to show little or nothing of his figure, and yet loitered so long in the street as to inflame the old ladies with the most ardent expectations of farther discovery. He repeated this frolic with divers petty variations, for the entertainment of different guests, and every repetition of it afforded him new diversion. The more frequently the old maids caught a glimpse of the muffled figure, the more eager were they to find out both the name of the person and the nature of his business. Voltaire's Man in the Iron Mask never excited more restless wonder or more extravagant surmises; sometimes the curious virgins conjectured the nocturnal visitor to be the lover of a handsome chambermaid, and sometimes their suspicions fell very heavy on the fair lady of the house, who was indeed possessed of every attraction to excite

"Envy in woman or desire in man;"

but her wit and beauty were equalled, if not surpassed, by her innocence and goodness. She frequently remonstrated against this cruel diversion of her husband, and protested he would be the death of the old ladies, by bringing them half naked into the cold air of the night. He maintained, on the contrary, that the curiosity of an old maid is so fiery a passion, that she who is thoroughly inflamed by it may expose her shrivelled body without danger of cold to the most unwholesome of nightly vapours.

The event proved his mistake; for persevering in his sport, and trying it as a Christmas gambol at a time when it snowed very much, the most elderly and infirm of the two ancient maidens, tempted, perhaps, by that hope of discovery which the additional light of the snow might give her, continued so long at her window that she contracted a rheumatic fever, which confined her for many months to her bed. Yet her sufferings, severe as they were, did not annihilate the curiosity which produced them, if I may credit the testimony of my friend. He positively asserted that he once desried this identical old maiden, before she had recovered the perfect use of her limbs, peeping through her sash at midnight, though she was under the necessity of supporting herself for that purpose on the arm of her sister.' One may, perhaps, be permitted to hope that there are not many Old Maids who carry their curiosity to such length.

Affectation is another failing of ancient spinsters which draws forth our author's satire. Here, for example, is the portrait of a lady whose excellent qualities of mind and heart were spoiled by her morbid craving to look juvenile:

'This oppressive dread of not appearing young, which is indeed ever present to her fancy, was remarkably conspicuous the other day when she sat for her picture to oblige a relation. When she cast her eye upon the sketch, in which the painter, to secure a likeness, had given peculiar strength to his outline, her vexation arose to agony. She apprehended that all the spectators of her portrait would read the horrid words *forty-seven* in every line of her face. This idea continued to prey on her mind to such a degree, that when she ascended a second time

into the sitting-chair of the painter her features exhibited more visible terror than those lovely victims, Anne Boleyn and the Queen of Scots, are said to have discovered when they mounted the block. Indeed, though her head was secure, she considered herself as going to lose in effigy the most precious part of it, namely, that fictitious expression of youth which she had incessantly laboured to preserve; and her dread of this loss arose to such an astonishing height that she had certainly fallen into an hysterical fit, if an early peep at the improvement of the painter had not happily relieved her. His penetration had discovered her foible; and, as he had known her intimately in her bloom, he generously called his recollection to his aid, and gave, as he advanced, so youthful an air to her face that it harmonised with a wreath of roses and all the juvenile decorations with which she had requested him to adorn her resemblance. Her raptures increased with the increasing beauty of the portrait, which became so young and lovely in the last sitting that the lady gazed upon her own image with such doting delight as almost entitled her to the name of an old Narcissus in petticoats.' Most of us, I think, have met ladies of this type among our acquaintances. The following sketch, too, cleverly portrays a failing which is not, however, confined to Old Maids:

'Petrea is perpetually engaged by a tragedy or a novel, which she reads with infinite avidity and a profusion of tears. You would suppose her, in these moments, the open-handed daughter of pity; but if the ideal hero or heroine, whose distresses have convulsed her bosom with sympathy, could start into real life, and ask the

sympathetic Petrea for five shillings, there would be an end to her sympathy; her open heart would contract, and become as closely puckered up as her purse. Yet the tenderness of Petrea is not affectation, as I once erroneously believed. Having studied her with attention, I am at length convinced that her tender feelings are genuine, and that her true character, which is that of humanity, will always show itself in its natural colours, except when it is overclouded by avarice—that cold and gloomy passion, which is not only apt to steal over advanced life, but to prevail more in celibacy than in wedlock! It was the following little incident which confirmed my present opinion of Petrea. During one of my visits to her, a clergyman came in, whom we both esteem as a man of veracity and virtue. He told a story of singular distress that had just befallen a family not unknown to us. The facts were well related, and the lady was much affected; but in the close of his narration, the good man happening to drop a compassionate hint of a five-guinea subscription, the gushing tears of Petrea were suddenly dispersed; her eyes became severe; her lips, pale and trembling, began to mutter doubt concerning the worthiness which she had just acknowledged; she then entered on a nonsensical dissertation on the frequency of impostures, and the propriety of people's suffering for imprudence.

'The sensible divine perceived the rock on which his charitable hopes were now splitting; and avoiding it with great dexterity, he pointed out to her a line of conduct in which her weight and interest might relieve the distressed family without expending a shilling. The heart of Petrea

now opened again; she cordially promised her assistance, and ultimately succeeded in the plan proposed, though it was attended with infinite trouble, which she uniformly supported with benevolent cheerfulness and charitable pleasure.'

Envy and credulity are the other two particular failings of Old Maids, which our author satirises in a similar fashion, but I cannot find space for his illustrative impersonations of those defects. The three 'particular good qualities' of the 'autumnal sisterhood' on which he dwells are ingenuity, patience, and charity; but I must reluctantly confess that he is less amusing as a eulogist than as a satirist, and consequently lends himself less readily to quotation.

Coming to the historical portion of the essay, it will perhaps rather startle many of the sex to learn that some illustrious fathers of the Church have held the doctrine that 'when our progenitors were first created, it was the intention of Heaven that Eve herself should become an Old Maid.' And further that, according to St. Romwald, Eve herself, in the ninety-ninth year of the world, instituted a religious order of 'certain young women, who were to continue virgins, and to preserve unextinguished the fire which had fallen from heaven on the sacrifice of Abel.' The latter myth is evidently identical with that of the origin of the Vestal Virgins in Rome. Then we have the story of Kunaza, the most beautiful of all the ninety and three daughters of Enoch, who, 'in the two hundred and ninety-first year of her age, rejected the last offer that was made to her of marriage,' and remained single to her death. Passing from mythical traditions to history, the author mentions

as a fact worth noticing, that throughout the whole history of the Jews there is no record of the existence of any one distinguished Old Maid. Nor was spinsterhood held in any more favour among the Greeks and Romans, though the honour and respect paid to Diana, Minerva, and the Vestal Virgins would seem to imply that under certain circumstances Old Maids were tolerated. But after the Christian era, as our author points out with much learning and ingenuity, there was an 'infinite increase of Old Maids.' The whole sex seems to have been inflamed with a passion for virginity, which was eagerly fostered by many of the most distinguished fathers of the Church. St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, and I don't know how many more, all wrote rhapsodies of passionate eloquence on celibacy as the most honourable condition of women. Indeed, to such excess was this veneration for the single state carried in the second century, that many preachers declaimed against marriage as the suggestion of the devil. But it is, perhaps, unnecessary to say that scandal played havoc with the reputation of these too enthusiastic devotees of perpetual maidenhood. The anecdotes which our author gives of the 'eccentricities, to use no stronger term, of the 'canonical virgins,' and other curious products of this craze for celibacy, are such as would not suit the pages of *London Society*, though I doubt not they added much to the popularity of the book in an age when more broadness of speech was tolerated in polite society than now. I may, nevertheless, I hope, without giving offence, quote a sensible remark of the author's on this apotheosis of virginity :

'Although this idea has certainly a very dazzling effect when embellished by saintly eloquence, yet, if justly examined, it exhibits, to a mind not tinctured with superstition, a very ludicrous absurdity ; for in truth it is saying that a human being can only resemble the Great Author of all things by producing nothing.'

Amongst all the sainted fathers of the early Church, however, St. Jerome appears to have been the favourite of the ladies. They flocked in crowds to hear his sermons and lectures in Rome. They overwhelmed him with presents, which, as he naively says, 'whether small or great, I did not despise ;' and some of them even left their homes and followed him to the Holy Land, where he ended an unquiet but illustrious life at the age of fourscore. And yet the good saint was very fastidious as regards the sex, for he says, 'No woman could delight me, except her whom I never beheld in the act of eating.' But from these saintly panegyrists of female celibacy I must tear myself away, though I confess that the author is nowhere more amusing, but, alas ! nowhere more unquotable, than in his chapters on the Old Maids of the early Christian era, and their venerable Platonic admirers. His chapter on 'Some Monastic Old Maids distinguished by Literary Talents,' 'Some Old Maids of the New World,' and 'On the Reverence paid to Old Maids by our Northern Ancestors,' I may not linger over ; but I cannot forbear quoting a passage from his chapter discussing the very delicate and important question, 'Which is the more eligible for a wife, a Widow or an Old Maid ?' First he takes the equitable view, and maintains that—

'Whether we consider marriage

as a burden or as an enjoyment, it is equally unjust that any female should twice suffer that burden, or be twice indulged in that enjoyment, while another, at the same period of life, is kept an utter stranger to the cares or to the delights of an important office, which she is equally ready to assume and equally able to support.'

He proceeds to argue thus :

'If the second or third husband of a widow may have frequent cause to imagine that his lady's transferrable affections are veering towards his probable successor, he cannot surely be so happy or secure as the man who has more wisely united himself to a worthy old maid. She, good soul! remembering how long she waited for her first husband, instead of hastily looking forward to a second, will direct all her attention to cherish and preserve the dear creature, whom she has at last acquired after tedious expectation. Her good man has no rival to fear, either among the living or the dead, and may securely enjoy the delightful prerogative of believing himself the absolute master of his wife's affections. I entreat you to observe how very different the case is with the inconsiderate man who has rashly married a widow! He has not only to apprehend that the changeable tenderness of his lady may take a sudden turn towards his probable successor; but if her thoughts are too faithful and too virtuous to wander towards the living, even then, after all his endeavours to take full possession of her heart, though he may delude himself with the vain idea of being its sole proprietor, he will frequently find that he has only entered into partnership with a ghost, and I will add the very probable consequence of such a partnership;

he will soon find that by the subtle illusions of his invisible partner he has lost even his poor moiety in that precarious possession, the heart of a remarried widow, and will find himself, at the same time, a real bankrupt in happiness.

'The affection of the remarried widow is a pocket telescope; she directs the magnifying end of it towards her good man in the grave, and it enlarges to a marvellous degree all the mental and all the personal endowments of the dear departed. She turns the inverted glass to his diminishing successor, and, whatever his proportion of excellence may be, the poor luckless living mortal soon dwindles in her sight to a comparative pigmy. But this is not the case with our quondam old maid. No; her affection is a portable microscope, which magnifies in a stupendous manner all the attractive merits and powers of pleasing, however inconsiderable they may be, in the favourite creature upon whom she gazes. Like an inexperienced but a passionate naturalist, she continues to survey the new and sole object of her contemplation, not only with unremitted assiduity, but with increasing amazement and delight. He fills her eye; he occupies her mind; he engrosses her heart.

'But it may be said in reply, If the man who marries an old maid has this superior chance of being uniformly beloved by his wife, since it is certainly the wish of every man who marries to be so, how happens it that men decide so preposterously against themselves, and perpetually prefer the widow to the old maid? Is not this constant preference a very strong argument in favour of the character so preferred? Does it not prove that the widow has acquired the art or power of conferring more

happiness on her second husband than the old maid is able to bestow on her first? for can we suppose that men, instructed by the experience of ages, would continue to act in constant opposition to their own domestic happiness in the most important article of human life?

'Alas! I fear there are more articles than one in which we inconsiderate mortals may be frequently observed to act against experience, against our reason, and against our felicity. That the widow is constantly preferred to the old maid I most readily admit; nay, I complain of it as an inveterate grievance; but I trust that I have accounted for this unreasonable preference, without adding a single grain to the weight, or rather to the empty scale, of the widow.'

So much, then, for this curious and exhaustive *Essay on Old Maids*, which I think I must have persuaded the reader is as amusing as it is learned and ingenious. And now, just a word in conclusion as to the author. The book, as I have said, was published anonymously; but the writer was soon known to be

William Hayley, author of *The Triumphs of Temper*, the friend and biographer of Cowper, and himself no mean poet and scholar. In the somewhat ponderous *Memoirs of William Hayley, Esq.*, edited by his friend Dr. John Johnson, I find this allusion to the subject of the present paper: 'In December 1785 he published, but without a name, the singular book in which his friends Sadleir and Warton had taken a lively interest, the popular though calumniated *Essay on Old Maids*. The benevolent intentions of the author in this work and the strange misconstruction and hostility which it experienced are temperately displayed in a new preface to a third edition. . . . Conscious of his pure intentions in composing the essay, he only smiled at the mistake of those rigid ladies who reviled the production as indecent and irreligious; and he exulted in the warm applause of several most accomplished and candid members of the sisterhood, who regarded and extolled it as an elegant and moral performance that truly deserved, not the censure, but the thanks and esteem of society.'

'GOLDEN GIRLS.'

A Picture-Gallery.

BY ALAN MUIR, AUTHOR OF 'CHILDREN'S CHILDREN,' 'LADY BEAUTY ;
OR CHARMING TO HER LATEST DAY,' ETC.

CHAPTER V.

MR. JEROME DAWE AT HOME :
GARDEN-PARTY.

MR. JEROME DAWE resided in the suburb of Middleborough. His house was a cosy little box, with a window on this side of the door and on that, and three trim windows above, all well painted, well cleaned, and notable for shining brass and fresh white curtains ; for although Jerome Dawe was a miser, this does not imply that he did not live like a gentleman. The instincts of the Dawes were high-bred, and while Jerome would go a long way to save a sixpence, yet he had his ideas about social requirements, and these he would carry out. His house was the house of a gentleman, and his dress the same ; his servants were neat and orderly in appearance ; his garden, front and rear, was tidy in winter and blooming in summer. In dinners and suppers, in coals and candles, in a thousand like matters which the social eye sees not, here it was that Jerome Dawe exercised his passion for saving. His favourite maxim was *that every penny should be looked to*, and, after making a due allowance for the manner of life which he judged reasonable, he applied this maxim with merciless severity. By thus living upon one-third of his income, and letting the rest roll up year by year, Jerome Dawe was fast passing from the state of com-

fort to the state of opulence. What satisfaction this gathering treasure brought with it readers will see as time goes on.

His adviser, comforter, and adjutant in all his stingy plans was his housekeeper. The name of this excellent female was Martha Spring. She was an unmarried lady, of blameless life and yellow complexion. She clad herself in garments of youthful colour and cut, and wore particularly short skirts, allowing her ankles to be fairly seen, thus imparting a girlishness to her appearance. Her age might be fifty-five, or more, but she was juvenile in her tastes as well as in her petticoats, professing to read Sir Walter Scott, and often quoting his lines,

'O woman, in our hours of ease
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,'

which she used to say were truly poetical. Sometimes, after her morning consultation with her master concerning dinner, when probably the pair would spend a quarter of an hour debating which half of a small codfish would be best for salting, Martha would skip like an ancient lamb out of the room, her nose raised towards the skies, and a literary vivacity in her expression, as, unconsciously to herself, she repeated,

'O woman, in our hours of ease.'

Invariably when this happened, Jerome Dawe would sink back in his chair, and say reflectively, 'Cul-

tivated woman, Matty—for her station.'

Indeed, the relations between Matty and her bachelor master, though quite innocent, were of an intimate kind; so much so that occasionally one or other of his friends would ask him in a jocular way, how Martha was this morning, a familiarity which Jerome Dawe never resented, but rather enjoyed. In reply he always assumed a rakish air, and used to say, 'You see, you dog, I was intended for the army,' leaving a gulf of suggestion concerning both the military and himself yawning before the inquirer's mind.

In his pleasant back garden, on a sunny September morning, quite a little party had met together. On the centre of the lawn stood a longwicker wheel-chair, in which lay the frail and sickly Violet, looking sad and sweet, and likely enough to fulfil the prediction of Jerome Dawe, which poor Sholto had overheard and misunderstood. A little way off her sister sat apart, playing with a small dog, and calling Sholto to see it jump through her hands. Sholto, very busy making a nosegay, would not look up from his work, although Mildred called him repeatedly. Little Eugene stood close beside her, proffering her many civilities with the best grace in the world, for indeed the little fellow had a charming manner. But Mildred would not repay him, not by a syllable nor a glance.

Sally Badger, with her husband and her son, had just entered the garden. At sight of her Jerome Dawe was seen to turn pale. Beatrice and Daniel Ruddock, who were already in the field, exchanged looks which signified mistrust, and fierce dislike for Sally. As for Samuel Badger, who slunk timidly across the lawn like a beaten dog, and as for Master Badger,

whose countenance was rounder and flatter and redder than ever, and who carried a great dog-eared book under his arm—upon these two Mr. and Mrs. Ruddock glared such open and blazing scorn that the father especially felt like a man subjected to rays from burning-glasses. But Sally Badger dealt a defiant salute at the Ruddocks, and then marched up and stood beside Jerome Dawe as if he were a wicket, and she a famous cricketer who had just gone in, and was more than ready for the bowling.

Indeed, the situation of the Ruddocks was critical. For years they had regarded Jerome Dawe's wealth as their lawful inheritance, and lately they had fixed their covetous eyes on little Mildred. Things looked promising. Jerome was weak, vain, and ignorant. This worthy couple had flattered and caressed him time out of mind; they had fed his every weakness; they had pampered his vanity with outrageous compliments; they had gradually got dominion over him in many directions. And all had been done with words and ways as soft as oil. Lately, however, there had appeared on the scene this terrible cousin, Sarah Badger. She was poor and unimportant; she had made a bad marriage, and was burdened with an uninteresting son; in a word, she was everything that Daniel and Beatrice Ruddock could successfully ridicule and that Jerome Dawe would naturally despise. But she knew human nature, this Sarah Badger; and she knew Jerome Dawe's nature from the surface to the core. She had read his weakness and his cowardice, and now she was beginning to assert authority over him simply by the force of will and temper. Horrible to tell, Jerome was beginning to yield in places,

like a frozen lake in early thaw. The Ruddocks were appalled. What could they do? It was impossible to begin bullying Jerome like this audacious woman: first, because it would be a reversal of their entire policy, which had been softness and flattery; secondly, because if they had adopted such a line Sally Badger might outwit them by a stroke of generalship, and, becoming soft herself, carry Jerome away for ever. Bitter was the animosity that lay beneath the smile with which the Ruddocks returned Mrs. Badger's salute. Sally's nod had been a perfect missile, delivered with a defiance, a *do your worst* air, which, coming from a woman who probably had not more than three gowns in the world, and had not paid her butcher's bill for six months, confounded these good people, who believed that money alone is power.

So Beatrice and Daniel walked apart in anxiety and even discomfort; but, as Daniel marked Mildred playing with her dog, his ruling passion overcame him. He forgot Sally Badger and Jerome Dawe and the impending peril.

'See, Beatrice,' he said, indicating the child with a nod of his head, 'one day that girl will be worth two hundred and fifty thousand pounds!'

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH CROSS-PURPOSES CHECKER CHILDISH LOVE.

Two hundred and fifty thousand pounds! Two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, got by any means whatever—only, *got*! Two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, whether in possession, reversion, remainder, or expectancy! O, miracle of money,

two hundred and fifty thousand pounds!

That tall, slim, chestnut-haired little girl, as she walked, or stood, or laughed, or ran, or talked, or was silent, or smiled, or frowned, was watched, not alone by Daniel and his wife, but by everybody on that little lawn. Two hundred and fifty thousand pounds seemed to encircle her head like the aureola of a saint. Her step suggested two hundred and fifty thousand pounds; her voice, her looks, everything she was, and said, and did, in one way or another, expressed—two hundred and fifty thousand pounds!

One exception should be made. The widowed mother of Sholto had just come to fetch her son, having heard of his misdeeds. She now made one of the party. Margaret Alexander was a widow, poorly clad, and with signs of privation and care upon her face, but her aspect was full of independence. Somehow, in that group of money-seekers, she presented, even to the eye, an expressive contrast. There was nothing sly in her look, no side glances, no angry darting of the eyes. She talked freely with everybody, and her conversation was spirited and her manner easy; for she too was a Dawe, and of gentle nurture. She had no designs on Jerome's wealth, though she was his niece. She had no line baited to catch little Mildred and her quarter-million of gold, though she too had a son to advance in life. Everybody knew that Margaret Alexander was clear of such designs, her reputation for independence and integrity being settled. Curiously enough, each of these plotting people respected her because she was too high-souled to stoop to the meanness which themselves were practising. Daniel Ruddock declared with truth that he enjoyed talking

with her. Beatrice treated her with marked consideration. Jerome Dawe was constantly asking her opinion, and deferring to it. Even Sally Badger took her by the arm and walked about with her, with powerful strides, as great cricketers do in pauses of the game. Indeed, to do the doughty Sally justice, she by no means felt the scorn and dislike for Margaret which she so visibly manifested for the Ruddocks. Margaret Alexander was on her own ground. She was a blood relation, and no interloper. Sally Badger was indeed ready, if matters went that way, to wage war with Mrs. Alexander; but it would have been honourable war, and Sally would have fought fairly. For the Ruddocks she had no such feeling. She hated them. There was no weapon she would not have used against them. And, under existing circumstances, the weapon she chose was open defiance, contempt, and dislike, which she took good care should be constantly on the very verge of rudeness, absolute quarrel, and such a complication that either she or the Ruddocks must quit the premises. The Ruddocks felt all this, as we have seen, and they trembled before her courage; and Sally knew they trembled.

All this time there was one person to whom everybody was kind. Little Violet was petted, caressed, and pitied, as one who is unconsciously passing away from a world whose sweets have never been tasted. And Violet, who had the most loving heart, replied to each endearment with so much sweetness, such bright little smiles of gratitude, and with a tinge of humour too, that even the worldly people around felt touched and had better thoughts as they looked on the wee white face, and thought of certain words about

young children which were spoken by the best Friend children ever had. And Margaret Alexander, who, like all the Dawe family, had religious zeal in her nature, sat down by the child, and, thinking in her good motherly heart that this frail being could have but a short time here, she spoke to her seriously about 'the better land' where mamma was; and tender little Violet's gray eyes filled with tears, and she asked the lady to come another day and talk to her about mamma. Mildred, who, hard and arid to others, was passionately fond of Violet, had stood close by during this little conversation, listening with wide big eyes; and she stole softly after Mrs. Alexander, and slipped a flower into her hand and ran away, leaving the widow in wonder. For already Mildred had impressed everybody with a sense of her independence, her imperiousness, and her wilfulness. She had snubbed Daniel Ruddock, who tried, in his vulgar way, to caress her. She had flatly refused to do something which Sally Badger asked her, which astounded Sally more than if the law of gravitation had been suspended. Two minutes after, Mildred had sent Jerome Dawe to fetch her maid. All she did, however, was submitted to without a murmur, because of the two hundred and fifty thousand pounds. But when she was seen stealing across the lawn, and putting this flower into Mrs. Alexander's hand, everybody wondered and everybody feared; and yet nobody thought of charging the widow with any design on the little heiress.

Side by side with this manoeuvring of the elders a curious game of cross-purposes was being played by the children.

Little Eugene had caught the

spirit of his father and mother and patron. The two hundred and fifty thousand pounds magnetised him like all the rest. He danced in his graceful way after Mildred, made her a thousand pretty little compliments, anticipated her wishes, and was in all points as natty a flatterer as a grown man. But it availed nothing. Mildred treated him with haughty disregard, and, indeed, snubbed him mercilessly. Every one except Mrs. Alexander noticed that wherever that ill-conditioned Sholto might be, looking like a ragged terrier, there Mildred was sure to be seen; and if she snubbed Eugene, Sholto amply avenged his friend by snubbing her. He was still busy at his nosegay, tying it up, taking it to pieces, and rearranging it with endless pains. Mildred hovered about him. She showed the greatest interest in the nosegay. She even went so far as to suggest that one particular rose should be placed in the centre, not at the side.

'There is where I should like it,' she said.

'Very well,' blunt Sholto retorted; 'there are lots of flowers, make a nosegay for yourself, and put roses where you please.'

'I wonder whom it is for?' Mildred said daringly. She was a daring girl, and part of her story will show it.

'You wonder who it is for?' Sholto said, looking up, with a laugh; 'just wait and see.'

'I think I know now,' Mildred answered, apparently much gratified by some inference of her own. She skipped across the grass, and for the first time that day seemed to be pleasant with little Eugene; but she cast her eye back at Sholto, as if computing how soon the nosegay would be finished.

It was set in order, and tied with a piece of stout packing-

thread; the thread was cut with a knife the size of a gardener's; the nosegay was ready for delivery. Sholto leaped on his feet.

Mildred had been talking to little Eugene, but her eyes were on the nosegay all the time, and she saw the last touch given to it. Eugene wondered why she looked about her in so strange a manner; he could not make her listen.

Presently Sholto came across the lawn.

'What do you say to *that*?' he cried to Mildred, holding up the nosegay. 'Pretty, now, ain't it?'

'Lovely! lovely!' she replied. 'O, thank you, thank you.'

'Tisn't for *you*,' Sholto called out scornfully. 'Did you think it was for you? I was not making it for you.' He repeated this 'for you' in a very injurious way. 'This is for Violet.'

And he ran across to the sick child, and tossed the nosegay upon her coverlet, and little Violet took it up with the brightest and sweetest smile Sholto had ever seen anywhere. The child was really pleased with the act of kindness; and such was the look of pleasure and gratitude she beamed at Sholto that he turned quite red, and found that he had an organ in his breast which was capable of a sensation altogether new to him, but very delightful.

Meanwhile, Mildred proudly walked off in another direction, and stood with her back to all the company, doing nothing at all, but fixed like a statue. Such a proceeding on the part of a young lady who, in all probability, would one day be worth two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, was by no means likely to pass unnoticed in a well-bred company. The results of Mildred's odd and alarming behaviour caused so sudden and general a movement that

the next minute all the people on the lawn were exclaiming to each other in a momentary fellowship that the heiress was crying!

CHAPTER VII.

WHICH GIVES A PICTURE OF A SHABBY-GENTEEL WOMAN STRUGGLING WITH GOOD SOCIETY.

THE relations of Sally Badger with the great Dawe family ought now to be delineated. Sally was the daughter of our great Jerome's younger sister. This Susan Dawe married a captain in the navy, who died at the age of fifty-five, and left his large family in poverty. When Sally came to woman's estate she saw that her chances of matrimony were of the most precarious and spiritless kind. She was not handsome; she was not accomplished; she was not rich. True, under such circumstances, ten thousand women have worked their way on to brilliant marriages; but such women have easy temper, complaisance, and address. Sally had none of these things. Defiance was wrought into her soul of souls. She loved command. Not to have won the heart of a prince could she have fawned, or sweetened her talk with compliments, or affected compliance where she did not feel it. And Sally knew of what material she was made. So, counting up her defects of face, fortune, and temper, one day, when she was touching the age of twenty-eight, she said to herself, 'Sarah Dampier, you will die without changing your name.' She pronounced this with the most dogmatic air, all alone as she was. Then, like other dogmatists, whose way is sometimes to annex a note of qualification to their utterances, she added, 'Unless—' Here she paused

again, and, drawing herself up to her full height, regarded with sternness the image in her poor looking-glass, and questioned it:

'Unless what, Sarah Dampier?'

And Sarah Dampier the actual answered Sarah Dampier the optical in tones of mathematical conviction,

'Unless you marry Samuel Badger.'

Samuel Badger was a clerk in a Government office, earning something like two hundred a year. He admired Sally. He was a meek young man, too fat for his age, of fair family, and spotless reputation. Sally Dampier's calculation was that if she married him, the Dawe family (who would never help her in a pecuniary way) might, by their influence, advance her Samuel in the public service. Acting upon this hope, Sarah Dampier changed her name to Sarah Badger just three months later.

Then began one of those lives of penury where the struggle for gentility on scanty means makes comfort hopeless. The income of the Badgers was not quite two hundred a year, and it never increased. Had Sally Badger been able or willing to forget that she was a lady born, or could she have repressed her ambition, she might have been domestically comfortable. I believe there is no more terrible tyranny on earth than that social requirement which insists that folk, such as the Badgers, shall wear the face of gentility. This is just what makes their whole life one long bitter fight. For house and food and raiment they have sufficient; but when it comes to keeping a drawing-room, and genteel clothing, and higher education of their children, why I believe only God, who surely hears the groans of these prisoners of fashion, knows

what misery ensues. The struggle to give the sons a professional education, and to keep the daughters on such a footing that they may hope to marry respectably—in how many small houses in England to-day is that fight maintained by parents whose meagre lives, as we survey them, seem utterly unheroic! O world, who knowest not thy heroes! I believe that the soldier, with his wild leap into the smoking breach, where sure death is grinning at him, or the captain calmly standing on the sinking ship watching till the last man and woman are safe in the boats, then going bravely down, make not such martyrs to Duty and Idea as these shabby uninteresting people do for years of dreary life. Here was Sally Badger stationed in a small tenement, with a little drawing-room on one side of the door, and behind that a little dining-room, in the rear a kitchen and scullery which ran out into the little back-garden, and three or four bedrooms over head. Sally Badger! She who had a share in the great traditions of the Dawe; who had sometimes been a visitor at the house of the great head of the family; who had sat down at table with lords and earls; and who would often tell her wondering son that once upon a time the Duke of Berkshire had helped her to marmalade at breakfast. These grand traditions ruled the life of Sally, and the little entrance-hall was kept bright from year to year, and the little drawing-room smart in summer and warm in winter, perhaps from a kind of idea that some day the Duke of Berkshire might remember the episode of the marmalade and drop in to call. If he did, Sally resolved that, even in her little house, there should be visible signs that hers was no

vulgarian's poverty. His Grace never called, but Sally had now and then a blue-blooded visitor to encourage her. The Dawes had one curious trait, that they never snubbed poor branches of the family. Of course Sally Badger was not asked to dinners, nor to pay long visits; but the Dawe blood in her was recognised by an occasional call or letter, and these were cordials for the woman in her life of struggle.

Her husband tired her. Do what she would, Sally could not drive ambition into him. His living was not expensive, for he was fond of bread-and-butter, and would eat it three times a day, and he never drank anything but water, and certainly made his clothes last wonderfully. Still Sally would have preferred an extravagant man, or an intemperate man, who had movement and ambition, to this bread-and-butter Samuel, who smiled for ever, and could not be put in a passion. His disposition was ruinously contented and easy-going. Even when a post in the office fell vacant slightly superior to his own, he was not a candidate for the promotion, but let another man be run into the situation over his head.

'Samuel!' Sally called out in agony, when she heard it, 'why did you not apply?'

'You see, my dear,' he answered, 'Martin is such a passionate man that if he had missed the post there never would have been peace in the office again; and it is only twenty pounds a year more, my love; and blessed are the peacemakers, you know, Sally.'

'Blessed are the milksops!' Sally cried out, in great vexation. She was not a profane person, but, in truth, she would not acknowledge the propriety of her husband's quotation. 'You are no peacemaker, Samuel. If peace

were really wanted, you would not manage it. O Samuel! twenty pounds would have nearly paid our house-rent, and I am worn to death slaving and pinching. Peacemaker, indeed! You are no peacemaker.'

'Well, perhaps I am not, dear,' Samuel replied, as he buttered his bread. 'I will not say I am.'

As another sample of the home conversation of this pair, and as a fresh glimpse of their characters, I set down a few words which they exchanged when—five years after marriage—Sally presented her lord with a diminutive Badger.

'I want to choose a name for him,' she said, looking at the little sleeper who lay beside her. 'I wish,' she sighed, and her face was full of foreboding—'I wish he was not such a quiet infant. He never screams, and always seems satisfied.'

Mrs. Badger gazed up at her husband's sleek face, and sighed again, as she said,

'I am really afraid, Sammy—I really *am* afraid—he has got your nose.'

Mr. Badger rubbed that feature, as if reproaching it for being what it was, but he judged that silence was his best policy. His wife ruminated awhile, and said again, as much to herself as to him,

'What shall we call him?'

'Suppose we try Samuel, for an experiment,' the father said shyly.

'I hate the name!' exclaimed Sally vehemently. 'You must think of another.'

'Now, do you know,' remarked Mr. Badger, not speaking to his wife in particular, but, as it seemed, addressing the general order of things, 'it is most extraordinary that just at this particular moment all the Christian names seem to have gone out of my head. How very singular! The only name I can think of is

"Tobias." Would Tobias do, my love?'

'Samuel!' exclaimed Mrs. Badger in a very loud voice; 'you will make me scream. Tobias! Tobias Badger! It would be like a name in a play.'

'Then, do you know, my dear,' said Samuel, with the air of one who all of a sudden makes a discovery, 'I think the best way will be for you to think the matter over quietly—alone. Something may come into your head, my love, when you least expect it.'

'What I want,' continued Mrs. Badger, in the same audible soliloquy, 'is a name with force in it. A name that will make a boy think about being something and somebody. Such a name as would suggest a man who can get into a passion, and contradict, and push other people aside, and lead the way, and fight for his own?'

'Don't you think you had better have several names, my love?' suggested the father. 'It would be rather much to expect all that out of one. We should never be unreasonable, Sally, my dear!'

'I have it!' cried Sally triumphantly; 'I have the very name I want—Hector!'

'Hector was a pagan, my love!'

'What of that?' retorted Sally boldly; 'better be a pagan than a fool!'

So Hector was the chosen name; and thus the names of the family into which our little Golden Girls entered were Samuel, Sarah, and Hector Badger.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHICH ENDS IN GENERAL LAUGHTER.

A FEW days after the scene in the garden, the modest mansion of Sally Badger was signalled among the neighbouring houses by

the unusual spectacle of a carriage and pair standing before it. Out of the carriage stepped little Mildred, and she, turning round to the servant who was with them, said, with an air of authority,

'Lift Miss Violet gently.'

And so little sick Violet was lifted out in the maid's arms. Her white face looked very lovely, for the air had painted upon it a most delicate vermillion, which lit all its melancholy grace into particular beauty, like one streak of sunset in a pensive western sky. There was expectation in the child's face; she wanted to see her new home.

Meanwhile, Mildred, with imperial steps, walked up the little flagged way that led to the front door, and at the entrance Sally Badger stood ready to greet her, smiling with wondrous complaisance,

'How are you, my dear?'

'Pretty well,' Mildred replied curtly. 'Is this the house you live in?'

'Yes, dear—at present.'

'Why, it is just the size of the house where papa's gardener lived,' Mildred remarked. 'Not quite so good, I think.'

'We are going to a much larger house very soon,' Mrs. Badger said; 'in about three weeks, dear.'

'But you have lived here until now,' Mildred rejoined, fixing her searching eyes on Sally. 'Is it because Violet and I have come that you are going to a nicer house?'

Sally Badger affected to be busy with the trunks, and made no answer, but she took note of this shrewd question.

'I tell you what, miss,' Sally said, under her breath, 'you are not a simpleton. You will need managing.'

'O, what a dear little house!' cried Violet, who came up just then. 'Look, Mildred, at those pansies, and that little white pussy. I think this is a dear little house. May I play with the pussy?' she asked, addressing Mrs. Badger.

'Pansies or pussies, or whatever you like, darling,' cried Sally, quite delighted with the child. 'You shall play with anything and everything.'

'Are you going to take care of us?' the little creature asked curiously, struck with a new thought. 'Will you be kind to us? Do you know mamma has gone to heaven, and left us?'

'I will be kind to you, dear,' Sally Badger replied, with great energy, bending down to kiss the child. 'Who could be anything else?' she murmured to herself, marking the white transparent cheeks and the thin hands and the little porcelain teeth which seemed to indicate a frail and perishing frame. 'You shall not shed many tears under this roof, and what you shed I shall wipe off.'

The little girls were soon led up to their bedroom, where Mildred, after her fashion, found fault with most things, and Violet, in her way, was constantly coming upon what was pleasant or whimsical or funny. Mildred's severity gave way before Violet's simple delight, and once or twice she even broke into a little laugh. For Mildred, amidst all her austerity, seemed to consider Violet before herself, and to regard things as pleasant or the reverse according as she judged them agreeable or disagreeable to her little sister.

Down into the small dining-room the two children were brought after a time, Violet holding her nurse's hand to support

her feeble steps, and Mildred walking in with her erect figure, and Diana step, and curious, searching, yet unconcerned gaze. Here sat Hector, poring over a book, and looking sheepish and uncomfortable, when the strangers entered.

'Reading again, Hector!' exclaimed his mother impatiently. 'Always reading! What good will ever come of that, I wonder? Do either go on one side or the other! Now, Mildred, this way.'

Mr. Badger was in the room also, waiting for his dinner. He rose and greeted the children.

'How do you do, my dears? How are both of you? You look very good little people, I am sure.'

'Samuel,' said Mrs. Badger decisively, 'that will do.'

So they sat down to dinner, and the first dish was a beefsteak pudding, served in a sort of white basin, and certainly not appetising to the eye. Mildred regarded the dish with an open stare which was immensely expressive. Little Violet broke in to a laugh full of music and fun, but strange by contrast with her delicate suffering face. She clapped her hands; and her sweet gray eyes filled with the pleasantest mirth.

'Look, Milly, just look, what a funny thing! O, I want some of that; when my turn comes, I mean.'

Shocked at her own boisterousness, she dropped her outspread hands under the cloth, and put on such a Quaker face that even Master Hector, whose round visage seemed for the most part as incapable of expression as a paste-board face in a pantomime, was moved to irrepressible admiration. As to Sally Badger's countenance, which turned in delight upon the child, it was like the shining sun.

'Have some, dear,' Mrs. Badger said to Mildred, as she sent her knife into the pudding, from which the rich brown gravy poured.

'Well,' replied Mildred, 'a very, very little, please.'

'I assure you, my dear,' said Mr. Badger, addressing Mildred at this point, 'you will find it very good eating; especially the gravy. Do you know, my dear, I am very fond of gravy, and have been since I was your age.'

Mildred set her eyes upon him, but spoke not a word.

'Samuel,' his wife said emphatically, 'have I not said that will do?'

The meal proceeded. Mildred toyed with her portion very like a high-bred child, but with suppressed discontent in every feature. Violet ate away quite heartily, and the only time Mildred looked pleased was when her sister asked for some more.

'I am so hungry,' she cried; 'it is so nice.'

'I am quite glad to hear you say so,' remarked the irrepressible Mr. Badger, looking up from his plate. 'It is an excellent dish, and especially the gravy, as I said before. Gravy,' continued Mr. Badger, warming with his subject, and addressing Violet as a hopeful disciple, 'is such a help with the bread. There it is you will find it useful. I assure you, my dear, if you cultivate a liking for gravy you will never regret it. As you go through life you will find gravy a wonderful help; one of your best friends, in fact.'

It was a sign of the subordinate place which Samuel Badger occupied in his own house that he invariably sat at the side of his table, near to his wife. Now, it may surprise the reader that he should have been allowed to ramble on for so long a time

unrebuked. The fact was his wife, who did not like to be perpetually reproving him before the children, especially the first day, had tried to reduce him to silence by nudging him suggestively under the table with her foot. Unfortunately, she had mistaken the leg of the table for that of her husband, so that her nudges produced no impression, and, her temper being roused by his insensibility, she at last delivered an honest kick, as she supposed, into her husband's shin. The wood of the table being a substance not so yielding as Mr. Badger's flesh, and Sally having an irritable and ill-protected corn, she inflicted on herself at that moment a blow she never forgot. In her anguish she uttered an ejaculation, which was delivered so heartily that everybody looked up.

'What is the matter, my dear?' her husband asked, perceiving by something in her actions that the cause of her disquiet was under the table. 'Is that troublesome cat there again?'

'Samuel!' his wife ejaculated, and no more. But she cast this verbal javelin with such an eye of fire that her husband did not speak again for a long time.

'What a funny spoon!' cried Violet again, when pudding time came. The spoon was German silver, and yellow with service. 'I never saw a spoon like this before.'

'Never mind, dear,' replied Mrs. Badger; 'things will be very different to-morrow. Everything will be different to-morrow. New knives are coming, and forks and spoons, and I don't know what beside.'

Just at this moment the pudding was set upon the table. It was a long pudding, and, like the

rest of the entertainment, not overtempting to a fastidious person. But both Samuel Badger and his round-faced son regarded it with evident interest, as a luxury, and to them a toothsome morsel.

'Now, Violet,' said Mrs. Badger, wielding her knife, 'have some of this pudding, my dear.'

'What sort of pudding is it?' the child asked.

'We call it "dog in a blanket,"' replied Mrs. Badger gravely.

She had not calculated upon the effect of this surname upon her little guest. Mildred maintained her usual air of aloofness, just touched with disdain; but little Violet, tickled by the idea in the words, broke into a hearty laugh.

'Milly! Milly!' she cried, almost faintly from her excessive mirth, 'dog in a blanket, Milly! Look at it!'

Off the little delicate creature went in miniature peals of laughter, with such a note of humour in every silvery round that the contagion was irresistible. It was plain that this sickly child had an acute sense of fun. The rest had to confess her power. First Master Hector, after ineffectually trying to quench his laughter by the ingenious method of thrusting a large German silver spoon into his mouth, let his merriment have free way. Then Samuel Badger, after a moment's hesitation, spent in glancing at his wife, followed by a series of long buttery laughs, drawn in with one breath and sent out with the other, like the bray of a donkey, a performance which redoubled little Violet's merriment. Mildred, after pulling Violet's skirt softly as a hint to her not to be so demonstrative, caught the infection also, and began to laugh for herself. Finally, Sally, surveying this laughing quartet, set her

knife and spoon down, and closed the procession with a peal of her own, which certainly was not the least hearty. Many a year had the Badgers lived in that little house, and many a meal had they eaten in that little dining-room, but such a sound of mirth the walls had never echoed as on this day, when frail sickly Violet Walsingham led the laughter.

CHAPTER IX.

POSSIBLE LEGATEES IN THREE POSTURES: GREEDINESS, ANXIETY, NOBLE REPOSE.

It may be thought a bad way, but in telling a story my custom is, instead of occupying the early chapters with a long preliminary account of the place in which the action lies, and the antecedents of leading characters, to introduce both to my readers bit by bit as occasion requires. Surely it is in this way, reader, that real life makes us acquainted with towns and houses, and men and women. Little by little, through days, or weeks, or years.

Accordingly, I think it quite time enough to tell you now that the present action of this story lies in the suburban part of that pleasant town Middleborough. In ten minutes, with moderately fast walking, you could put a girdle round the houses in which Jerome Dawe, Sally Badger, Mrs. Alexander, and the Ruddocks severally resided. These people all knew each other, and were all upon speaking terms with each other, dealt at the same shops, attended the same church, talked the same talk day by day. They also called each other by their Christian names, being every one related more or less closely; for Beatrice Ruddock had a remote connection with the Dawes; and in virtue of his wife's

affinity Daniel too was admitted to the honour of this familiar appellation. So when these people met the talk was full of 'Daniel,' and 'Sally,' and 'Margaret,' and 'Jerome,' and 'Beatrice,' giving a very friendly air to the intercourse. Alas! there was much plotting underneath. For this, it must in truth be said, the Ruddocks were to blame. They, who of the coterie were the most remotely connected with Jerome Dawe, had long marked his fortune for their own. Until lately they had resided in the country, and used to have Jerome staying with them for long visits, by which device they secured opportunities of gaining influence over him. Proud Margaret Alexander, poor as she was, never even resented Jerome's open preference for these designing people, whose mean arts she scornfully deciphered from the first. She treated him with the same half-daughterly affection which she had always shown to him. Not so Sally Badger. Sally repeatedly remonstrated with Margaret, clenching her fist, and declaring that if she could get at those Ruddocks she would soon make them know their place. But the Ruddocks lived far off, and Sally had little power over them, until the schemers, affecting weariness of rural life, but in reality fearful of Sally's possible counterplots, resolved to take a house in Middleborough, near to Jerome Dawe. By this means they hoped to bring Jerome entirely under their influence. They did not perceive that this new policy must give Sally many openings for warfare. The first intimation of the mistake they had made came when Sally, by sheer stress of determination, swept Mildred and Violet out of their hands. Daniel and Beatrice turned green with vexation that

day, and in their hearts cursed Jerome Dawe for a pliant fool, forgetting that were he not a pliant fool they could have no power over him. But Daniel, after sitting for two hours in his contemplative posture, with his shoulders shrugged up about his ears, said to his wife,

'The whole question lies in a nutshell, Bee. Are we, or Sally, best able to manage Jerome?'

'We,' answered Beatrice, with a laugh full of self-reliance.

'I am not quite sure of that,' Daniel replied. 'Sally is a tigress. And it is never wise to be too sure when you are dealing with a tigress.'

'We shall have our way at last,' said his wife, so safe in her grand conclusion that she disdained argument in detail.

'I hope we may. We must be civil to Sally.'

'Civil to Sally, Daniel! Of course we must. That is what cuts her. That is what will defeat her. Civil! I should think so!'

Beatrice laughed maliciously, and Daniel, looking up at her gravely at first, caught her mood, and took his part in the laughter, as if it were a concerted piece of music.

Their hope was that they might so provoke Sally that she, in her rage and fury, might rush into some desperate position, and declare war upon them, they, of course, maintaining a pacific aspect. To effect this with more apparent sincerity they must never be ruffled by Sally's rudeness; in fact, they bore her outbursts with a Christian meekness, which Jerome Dawe did not fail to mark. All was done that when they struck they might strike indeed. As yet, however, they had made no way. Sally had a formidable ally in Margaret Alexander. Jerome really respected this

niece, and wondered that she, poor and a widow, should yet so nobly disdain the money which was his god. Jerome had a strong tincture of religion in his constitution—superstition might be a fitter word—and Margaret Alexander was really pious. The up-shot was that, so far as legitimate and honest influence went, no one had such power over Jerome Dawe as Margaret Alexander. And Margaret liked Sally. She deplored her cousin's eagerness for earthly things, but her honesty she admired; so that as often as Jerome mentioned Sally's name Margaret said something handsome, and these few tributes were just sufficient with a weak man like Jerome to frustrate the efforts of the Ruddocks, who worked night and day to edge Sally altogether out of his favour.

Let justice now be done to Sally Badger. She had the money-hunger of a poor and struggling housekeeper, unchecked by the finer sentiments of her cousin. Still, there was no wish on her part to take an unfair advantage of Margaret. Had Jerome's wealth been prospectively divided in equal parts between herself and Margaret, she would have been perfectly satisfied. But Margaret absolutely refused to lift a finger in the matter, though she had to pinch hard to keep herself and her boy respectably, and so Sally was forced, in the language of the whist-table, to play for her own hand.

'All I can say is, Margaret,' Sally remarked one day, 'if you are going with your fine scruples to let this money slip away I am not, at least not without a fight for it. O Margaret! if those Ruddocks get uncle's property, I shall die. I shall die, Margaret!'

'Live for something that won't

disappoint you, Sally,' replied her grave cousin, who that very morning had been compelled to give up the dress she had hoped to buy because Sholto's education was becoming so expensive. 'Choose the better part, Sally. Choose the one thing needful, Sally.'

'The one thing needful for me,' replied Sally, unconsciously anticipating a modern witticism, 'is ready cash. We are in great straits this quarter.'

'So am I—often,' replied Margaret.

'And what is your way out of the fix?' asked Sally, a little sullenly. She could tell what Margaret's answer would be.

'I trust God,' the other answered, with simple cheerfulness. 'And I am not going to soil my fingers by trying to grasp uncle's money,' which the brave woman said with an air of lofty purpose, that showed how the blood of that original rascal Dawe had been fined by time and transmission.

'Margaret,' Sally retorted, getting a little brighter in prospect of her joke, but still with a grim smile, 'if there was nothing except money to soil my fingers, I should not have to wash my hands very often!'

CHAPTER X.

A CURIOUS VIEW OF MUTUAL SOCIETY, HELP, AND COMFORT.

THE Ruddocks, we have said, lived not very far from the humble tenement which at present housed the Badger family. Our action now flits to the dining-room of this mansion, where were seated after breakfast Beatrice and her lord. Daniel Ruddock sat at the table with his desk open before him, and his warped figure and high shoulders gave him a

remarkable and almost deformed appearance. He was busy at his accounts, and although the morning was warm he was wrapped in a great shawl, which by no means lessened the oddity of his aspect. It was a pinched face and a forbidding, which, with a curious tense look upon it, pored over the figures; and the dry thin lips moved in inaudible calculations, as his pen travelled slowly down the column. Beatrice reclined in an easy-chair. Her attitude was careless, even inelegant, as if posturing were not worth thinking of now; yet she looked a handsome matron, and, when contrasted with her husband, the wonder arose how she could ever have linked her comely self to so meagre a creature. But there they were; and to do Beatrice and Daniel justice they maintained the matrimonial relation in greater harmony than many better people can. They had the great bond of union in their tastes. Daniel was not only fond of his wife, but respected her too, and, after his kind, he was affectionate with his son and daughter. His master passion was love of money. Beatrice was as fond of money as he; she loved her son; and her pride—disappointed in Daniel—was now awaiting in a mood of deferred expectation for the time when little Eugene—and perhaps the daughter Lucy—would make a figure in society. Daniel loved money for money's sake; Beatrice loved it for the sake of the position it gave, and most of all for the sake of little Eugene, whom the ambitious mother hoped might one day be a peer, and she alive to see it. The peerage ran in the heads of all the Dawes, even in the remote collateral branches.

As Daniel was just carrying 'one,' 'ought,' 'nine,' which for some reason he pronounced aloud,

he was seized with a violent fit of coughing, which shook his paltry frame as a strong wind shakes a vile shanty. He threw himself back, exhausted with the effort, and panted for breath.

'I am a poor sickly devil!' he said, as soon as he could speak. And then, repeating the words more easily and deliberately, 'A—poor—sickly—devil.'

Beatrice looked at him with an expression of anxiety, and Daniel, with his keen eyes, caught the look, and changed colour.

'What does the doctor say of me, Bee?' he asked. 'Tell me, without any reserve, what *does* the doctor say?'

'He says you must be careful,' Beatrice answered, with hesitation; 'very careful in the winter.'

Another onset of coughing racked his frame, and for several minutes he could not speak.

'I doubt if any care will keep me here long,' he said. 'However—business—business!'

And he bent over his accounts again.

'I have been thinking, Bee,' he said, looking up as he sank back in his chair, and putting the feather of his pen to his lip, 'I shall reduce Gaby's wages eightpence a week.'

'Do you think so, Daniel?' she remarked. 'He keeps the garden very neat.'

'He will keep the garden as neat on fourteen and four as on fifteen,' replied Daniel.

'His wife had another child last week,' she remarked.

'My dear, if I were to give eightpence a week to every labouring man whose wife had another child last week, I should have to pay a pretty penny. Why did his wife have another child? I should have thought four enough. It is a curious thing,' Daniel said, playing more

actively with the feather, as if to stimulate his mind, 'gardeners always do go on having children. I suppose because Adam was told to multiply, and they think they have succeeded to the business.' He sniggered over his joke, at which Beatrice smiled complaisantly. Then she said,

'Eightpence a week is scarcely worth mentioning.'

Daniel rose up in his chair, his face all on the alert, and his expression that of a man who has got an opening for a favourite argument.

'Eightpence a week not much!' he cried. 'Let me show you what eightpence a week is. It is one pound fourteen shillings and eightpence each year. That is not much, you say. There we don't quite agree, but pass that by. In forty years, what will eightpence a week amount to? He had the figures ready, for out the sum came without any computation.

'It will amount to sixty-nine pounds six shillings and tenpence. There is more than that. Keep investing your few pounds from time to time as they roll up—investing judiciously—and, at the end of the forty years, you may have not sixty-six, but one hundred pounds saved!'

'One hundred pounds saved after forty years, Daniel!' Beatrice said, shaking her head. 'It is not much, after all.'

'Yes! yes! yes!' cried Daniel eagerly, 'but go on saving eightpences! Save ten a week: one in coals, one in candles, one in note-paper and envelopes, one in the kitchen, one in the dining room, and so forth. In forty years your saved eightpences alone will amount to one thousand pounds! One thousand pounds, Bee! That is the way fortunes

are made. That is the way money rolls up. Look at me. I am only fifty to-day. I may live to be ninety. Many people do. And at ninety, there would be my thousand pounds, made up of saved eightpences. How a man would feel in his old age, to see one thousand pounds in gold lying on the table before him, and he able to say to it, "There you lie, great heap of shining gold; hundreds would risk their necks to get you off that table. You would start a man in life well. For the sake of you, ten thousand men in England to-day would lie, swear, steal, cheat, forge, risk their lives by sea or land, in fair ways or foul; but you are mine, mine, mine, without wrong or danger—one thousand pound in shining gold."

The sick man grew quite eloquent, struck his hands together, and a flush stole out upon his pallid cheek as he depicted this triumph. Then, sinking back once more in his chair, he feebly said,

'Yes, I shall reduce Gaby eightpence a week.'

A little pause followed upon this instructive dialogue, and Daniel, looking up at his handsome wife, began a new subject.

'Sally has played us a fine trick about those girls.'

'Odious woman!' Beatrice remarked, with a most honest expression of dislike. 'How can she have any good blood in her!'

'Come! come!' Daniel cried, interrupting her. The subject of good blood he never would listen to, except under compulsion. 'There is nothing to be got by calling Sally names. She plays her game. We must play ours, Bee.'

'What is our game to be?' Beatrice asked sulkily.

'I am going to tell you,' Daniel

replied, glancing round to see if the door was shut. 'I have my plan for getting those girls out of her clutches, and into our hands. It is a plan that cannot fail. With decent caution, it cannot fail.'

'What *can* it be?' Beatrice asked, greatly interested, and knowing that her crafty husband would not speak in this way without good reason. 'O, I shall be glad to outwit her!'

'Come here,' Daniel said, 'and sit beside me.'

Beatrice went to his side, and, seating herself on a footstool, threw her hands carelessly about him; and he, pleased with the attention of his handsome wife, caressed her affectionately, and for a moment his thoughts ran in another direction. Then, all at once, his face puckered up into the most plotting look. A wicked expression stole out on his features, just as a look of suffering might appear on one suddenly smitten with an acute pang. Full of the matter, he bent low down, and was beginning thus,

'I can tell you the whole plan, from beginning to end, in five minutes.'

When, as if to warn him that other circumstances were at work in human affairs than he was taking into account, the maid tapped at the door, and, throwing it open, announced,

'Major Sanctuary, if you please, sir.'

CHAPTER XI.

'MAJOR SANCTUARY, THE QUIDNUNC CLUB, 199A PICCADILLY.'

MAJOR SANCTUARY entered. He was a tall man, with hair rapidly turning from iron-gray to white. His face was thin, perhaps with meagre living, or possibly

from leanness of constitution. He wore a frock-coat buttoned tightly round his thin frame, and his whole attire, cravat, linen, and boots, while marked by the most scrupulous neatness, set forth either extreme stinginess, or genteel poverty. His voice was loud, even blustering, and there was a kind of Pistol swagger about him which contrasted strangely with his thread-bare coat, and yet more strangely with an air of good breeding which no eccentricity of dress and manner could quite efface.

'How d'ye do, Ruddock?' he called out, catching that gentleman's eye first. 'Mrs. Ruddock, I am delighted to see you looking so well—so charming—this disagreeable weather.'

Saying this, Major Sanctuary leaned on his cane and surveyed his friends with a rigidity and erectness of posture which might have done credit to a monument.

'Very pleased to see you, Major,' Daniel called out, with a face which threw doubt upon the assertion. 'Where will you sit? Not sit at all? Just so. But dear me, Major, I am afraid I can't quite return your compliment to Mrs. Ruddock as to healthy looks.'

Daniel was very fond of talking about health.

'You don't look quite the thing. A little yellow. Liver, eh?'

'No, no, no,' the Major answered, with great spirit; 'nothing of the kind, Ruddock—nothing of the kind. It's the Quidnuncs, sir.'

'The *what*?' Beatrice asked, wondering.

'The Quidnuncs, ma'am,' the Major replied, revolving on his axis to address Mrs. Measure with greater ease, but still keeping his monumental attitude. 'The Quid-

nuncs is my new club, 199A Piccadilly, and a very pretty situation too!'

'Another club, Major!' Beatrice exclaimed.

'Yes, ma'am, another club,' the Major answered, rapping with his right hand on the table. 'And the best of all, I assure you. Small. Tidy. Well ventilated. Good company. And special privileges.'

The Major delivered these statements separately and in jerks, giving one the idea of a man reading down a column.

'This makes twenty-one clubs, does it not, Major?' Beatrice inquired—more, it seemed, for something to say, than from curiosity.

'Twenty-one, ma'am, exactly,' Major Sanctuary answered. 'Reminding one of the old adage, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again." I have been trying London clubs for years, ma'am, spending a mint of money, and always getting disappointed. But I went on at it, and I have found what I want at last. The great feature about the Quidnuncs is, that members can introduce lady friends to have a bit o' lunch. A great convenience to a dog of a bachelor like me, who knows half the town, and is invited by half the town, but who, living in lodgings, is not able to return civilities under a roof of his own.'

'So you entertain ladies at your club?' Beatrice remarked, in the listless way in which, for politeness, people keep up an uninteresting conversation. 'How very pleasant!'

She smiled.

'Remember, ma'am,' the Major continued, with severity, noticing her ironical look, 'they must be ladies. Nobody questionable, and nobody of inferior social position. O dear, no, not for a moment!'

Let me give you an illustration. There is my friend Thistle, a very well-meaning man, but not altogether as sharp as an attorney-at-law. Some weeks ago Thistle asked two lady friends to lunch with him. It came out — or people thought it came out — that on the reputation of one of these ladies there was a speck. Now, Mrs. Ruddock, don't frown. I assure you, ma'am, it was not even alleged to be more than a speck. I should forfeit my life if it was more than a speck. Very well. The lunch passed off. Next morning our secretary, Jones, meets Thistle in the entrance-hall, which, by the way, is marble, ma'am, and as slippery as ice, as I shall show you by another pleasant anecdote another day. Jones is an out-spoken man, who takes his bull by the horns. "Sir," says Jones, addressing Thistle, "can you give me the name of the lady who lunched with you yesterday?" "Certainly," replies Thistle. "How did you make her acquaintance, sir?" asks Jones. "Sir," Thistle answers, "she was once very kind to my wife's mother." "All I can say is, sir," replies Jones, "she has been very unkind to your wife's mother's son-in-law." (Jones has that way of tossing your words up in the air like a juggler, and catching them in another shape as they come down.) "What do you mean, sir?" asks Thistle. "Simply, sir," Jones answers, "that you will be scratched off the list of this club in about as short a time as it takes to dip the pen in the ink and take it out again!"

Major Sanctuary paused here, and left a blank in his narrative. Then he resumed:

'Thistle is a timid man, and would not face the affair. And as sure as I am standing here, alive, before you, this morning,

ma'am' — the Major said this with another little axial movement to settle the fact of his being alive — 'there is no saying where the thing would have stopped. Now, how do you think it all arose? *How* do you think it all arose?' the Major repeated, rapping the table with great asperity, as he repeated the question.

'I cannot possibly say,' Beatrice replied.

'The letter S, ma'am,' the Major continued — 'that single letter, ma'am. The fact was a careless correspondent wrote Tomkin, when he should have written Tomkins. His charge was levelled against one Mrs. Tomkin. Thistle's most reasonable and crushing reply was to the effect that his friend's name was Mrs. Tomkins. The thing was cleared up, and we gave Thistle a dinner last night; and what with our fine dishes, and our rare wines, ma'am, and the desire to blot the thing out of Thistle's memory, no wonder if I am a little yellow this morning. Yellow, ma'am! the wonder is that I am not purple and scarlet as well. Such a night is enough to turn a man into a rain-bow.'

Major Sanctuary did not give the impression of high feeding or deep drinking either; indeed, as he nervously remarked a button of his coat which threatened to come off, and tried to conceal it by putting his hand upon his chest in a careless way, he looked much more like a needy gentleman than the dashing member of twenty-one clubs.

'And what has brought you down here so early, Major?' asked Daniel Ruddock, perceiving that the story was concluded.

'Just dropped down to see my little creature,' the Major replied, with an air of mingled importance and indifference; 'I just

came to see that my rooms are aired, you know, and all going on well. I return to town to-morrow; you are too still for me here—upon my life you are far too still!

'I hope you find your daughter well?' Beatrice remarked, in her uninterested way. 'I have not seen Victoria for a long time.'

'Just what I was thinking,' the Major cried, like a man who has got an opening for something he wants to say. 'And I have been scolding Victoria for not availing herself more of your kindness. I assure you, Mrs. Ruddock, nothing gives her father so much pleasure as to hear that she has been entertained by you. She will learn much from you, ma'am, which a girl ought to know; learn it imperceptibly by mere contact'—the Major said this with a gallant bow—and besides, ma'am, there is your charming boy. A most engaging little fellow, upon my life. A perfect man of the world in an Eton jacket. Quite a miniature Chesterfield. Ah, Mrs. Ruddock,' the Major said significantly, 'he is a delightful companion for my daughter Victoria. Such a companion as I should choose from ten thousand.'

Beatrice exchanged a very significant look with her husband as the Major paid her son this compliment, and she bit her lip, and so hid a smile.

'In fact, ma'am,' the Major continued, emboldened by the progress he had made, and this time not noticing the lady's ironical lip, 'that was the reason of my visit this morning. I wish to say that whenever you ask Victoria she will be delighted to come, and that I, as her only parent, highly esteem the opportunities which your pleasant hospitalities offer to my girl.'

Major Sanctuary still main-

tained his monumental posture; but though he looked from one face to another with great alertness, he neither drew any inference from the cold keen eyes of the lady, nor perceived her veiled satiric expression. He did not even see that Daniel Ruddock put his hand to his face to cover an undoubted grin. For five minutes longer the conversation was kept up with the Major's unflinching vivacity, and then, with many a bow and smile and civil speech, he took his leave.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH IT IS AS WELL FOR MAJOR SANCTUARY THAT HE IS ON THE OUTER SIDE OF THE PARLOUR-DOOR.

'Poor fool!' Daniel said politely, as the door shut upon the Major. 'I wonder does he think any one believes him?'

Beatrice laughed as she arranged the table-cloth, which the eloquent Major had displaced in one of his flighty passages.

'Twenty clubs!' continued Daniel scornfully; 'more likely one; and pretty well he takes the worth of his money out of *that*. I am told that he has one bedroom at the top of a house in the Strand, and that literally he passes his whole waking life in the club, never disappearing except at dinner hour, and then only when there is no chance of an invitation.'

'Did you not remark what he said about Victoria?' asked Beatrice, who had let her imprisoned lip go free.

'Rather!' replied the polished Daniel.

'And our miniature Chesterfield?' continued Beatrice scornfully. 'He would like to sow the

seeds of an affair between Eugene and Victoria. O, the impudence of some people !

'Better put a stop to it at once,' Daniel said angrily. 'Better give him the cold shoulder—cut him dead ; you know how.'

'I cannot cut him, my dear.'

'Not ! why not, pray ?'

'Do you not see ?' replied Beatrice calmly. 'Sir John is the Major's first cousin, and it is through the Major we get admission to the Hall. Quarrel with the Major, and we lose hold of Sir John. Now, my hope is that by management Bob Sanctuary may fall in love with our Lucy. I should like to see my daughter Lady Sanctuary. You see, Daniel, the thing is possible. We have money, and when Jerome dies we shall have more. The Sanctuaries are poor. The day may come when Lucy Ruddock, with thirty thousand pounds, may be an acceptable wife to a young baronet with an encumbered estate. O no ! we must not break with the Major.'

'If you do not break with him,' said Daniel, 'perhaps the Major will be too many for you. Eugene may be hooked and landed before you can prevent it.'

'Leave that to me, Daniel,' his self-reliant wife replied. 'If Eugene is caught by Victoria, or by Victoria's father, I will forgive the catcher, that's all.'

'It is confoundedly impudent of the Major,' Daniel remarked, with an air of reflection, 'and impudence I cannot stand.'

'Well ! well !' Beatrice said impatiently, 'leave the Major to me.'

I want you to think about the future. Here is my scheme. Let us get Eugene engaged to Mildred. That I can manage through Jerome. Then, if we can gradually contrive to get up a little attachment between Lucy and Bob Sanctuary—'

'Who will be Sir Robert Sanctuary,' remarked Daniel.

'If Eugene has got a wife so enormously rich, we shall have money to spare for Lucy. O, we can make Lucy such a prize that the Sanctuaries will hunt us instead of our hunting them.'

'We have not secured Mildred yet,' remarked Daniel.

'Not yet ; but did you not say you had a plan ?'

'I did !' cried Daniel, and his face gleamed with satisfaction. 'I have such a plan, Bee, such a plan ! To defeat Sally. To get the children into our hands. To secure virtually the guardianship of them. And all in such a way that not Margaret, nor Jerome, nor even Sally herself, will suspect that we had a hand in it. O, it is—it is a plan !'

He laughed almost in an ecstasy, and rubbed his hands together ; but in the midst of his mirth a fit of coughing seized him and changed his manner in a moment. His thin frame doubled together, and the violence of the cough threatened to throw him into a convulsion. Faint and breathless, at last he sank back in his chair, and, motioning with his hand towards the sideboard, he gasped,

'A drop—a drop—of brandy ; never mind the water. I think I am going to die.'

(To be continued.)

UPROOTING.

AFTER a certain age neither plants nor people will bear well the process known as transplanting, but more properly named, that is, if called as we have headed this paper; that is to say, if they are ordinary creatures, and not accustomed, as are some, to be hurried hither and thither from one house, or one pot, to another, scarcely recognising one as a home before another calls out to them to be filled up. At quarter-day one's mind turns insensibly towards the process, especially in as far as regards human beings; for then down many a country lane heavily-laden wagons begin to creak, groaning under the weight of what are, to the ordinary mortal, mere chairs and tables, but that represent to the more imaginative such sentiments, epochs, and suggestions that, enrolling themselves in one, form insensibly an idyll or an epithalamium, or perchance a funeral march, according to the especial appearance of the goods in process of removal, or the folks that form the apex of the load that passes us. As we wander either in the road strewn with the red and yellow and brown leaves torn from the trees by autumn's furious hand, or in the lane bordered by the fine, tender, newly-springing foliage of the elm and the pale thin tassels of the bending larch, there seem more of these flittings going on at those two times than at either the June or December quarter-days. In June there is a settled calm in Nature that seems to arrest all vigorous life, and gives us moments in which to bask in the sun and simply exist; and in

December it must be the possession of a bold soul or a bad shelter indeed that causes any human being to shun the evils he knows to fly to those he wots not of. But in the spring every one is hopeful; and in September there is just time to settle in, they say, before the long dark nights are on us, with days that are well-nigh as dismal as the nights.

True, there are all kinds of uprootings. There is that joyful one known as matrimony, when the maiden is removed altogether from the fair border where she was, as it were, one flower among many—very sweet and precious verily, but of no especial value, save as one of the ornaments where all were ornamental—to a space clean and fair, and ready for cultivation, where all is prepared for blooming, but waits until she shall come, like the sun, to call into life dormant flowers, and bring forth sweet scents, to note that that wonderful thing, a new home, has been formed on earth.

Each young couple that begins housekeeping on the right basis brings the Garden of Eden before man once more. There are they two, alone; love raises a wall between them and the outer world. There is no serpent there—and, indeed, he need never come, nor does he, so long as Adam and Eve keep him at bay; but too often the hedge of love is broken just a little, either by small discourtesies, little inattentions, small incivilities, that gradually but surely become wider and wider holes, until there is no hedge at all, and all sorts and kinds of

monsters enter in and riot there, uprooting, indeed, but so sadly that the roots lie exposed to the air, and so are not worth transplanting elsewhere. But, looking at the brighter side, that is as often to be found, thank God, as the darker, at times it becomes necessary that that first home must be left, and then comes uprooting indeed—painful exceedingly, but not irremediable, because most of that that makes home ‘homey’ is to be uprooted too. But we may take our chairs and tables, ay, and copy in detail each little pet contrivance for comfort that, with the growth of years, made the old house what it was; yet they are uprooted, too; and the chair that just filled the dusky corner, where it was so delightful to sit and catch the last faint glow of the evening sky, and looked so well just there, appears a shabby creature, for which we grudge the cost of the carriage away from its sombre surroundings, where it was right, because it was part and parcel of them. You cannot live several years in one house without allowing that house to become part and parcel of yourself. Inconvenient, unhealthy, dull as it may have been at the worst times of the year, uncongenial as were all your surroundings, yet, without your knowing it, your roots have become so twined around and in the poor thin soil that, although you are cognisant that you are about to be removed into a more congenial atmosphere, and fed on richer, more substantial food, you cannot skip over the time of drooping ere taking root, that has curious acute agonies for all those who have ever endured it. There was in our old house a dining-room door, over which we expended much time and some little amount of

bad language. Somehow or other the lock would never catch; put in what nails you might, they never seemed to hold; and the moment the weather changed, for good or ill, that door had different wailing notes that enraged us beyond bearing, and that no amount of oil could ever cure. Yet, though we shut our better-made doors in the new house with a sense of relief, we can but remember that on our old enemy are little pencil-marks, denoting when baby first stood upright, how tall she was, and how, at the same age, baby number two was at least a quarter of an inch less, and so proved, to our satisfaction, that universal theory that, come who may after it, no child is ever as big or as marvellously clever as the one who made us feel like gods among men, as creators and owners, speaking in all reverence, of a human creature. There, too, on the old door are white suspicious patches, where the paint was banged off by the peculiar manner of entrance of our dear old dog Bung. There is no other remembrance of him—no tangible remembrance, at least—for we can never forget his peculiar ways, and how he ate twenty-eight sparrows at one standing, feathers and all; and how he would fish with his paw out of a stable-bucket, in which the boys had put a store of roach and dace, catching and eating them all; and, when he was asked about them, how he sat low on his haunches, not quite cringing, for he was not certain if they knew of his guilt, but with an expression on his face that said plainly, ‘If you know of my sin, I’ll confess and beg pardon; but if you do not, I can point out some one else who did it.’ And when we looked at the door he went out hurriedly, scratching two patches of paint

into one as he made his exit. When he died, and was buried under the mulberry-tree on the lawn, we would not have the door repainted, putting it off until now, when, doubtless, the person who has taken the house will immediately scour off our dark-green paint, and have the door grained in horrible imitation of some rare wondrous wood.

The schoolroom, too, must certainly have a new paper, as in sundry corners are suspicious dirty little paw-marks that speak to us loudly of unlearned lessons and disgrace, out of which we had to beg the culprits. But though it was terribly small and inconvenient, and the big boys and girls have quite a beauty now, with a grand dado, and an anteroom to hold the odds and ends, yet in the old place are memories that no amount of time spent in the new house will contain in such freshness and sweetness as are there. For cannot we see the quaint solemn face of our eldest as she sat in her high chair, her feet not able to touch the highest rung, and with big blue eyes gazing at the A B C, held up to her gaze by the tremulous hand of the much-be-ringed pupil-teacher, who, divided between agonies of bashfulness and the consciousness of a great rise in the social scale, endeavoured respectfully to give her an insight into the mysteries of the primer? We shall never see that room again; indeed, we could not if we would, as it would not then be our room; but no new house can ever hold the first schoolroom, or that chamber where our dear old nurse sat and scolded and pretended to consult us on our babies the very day before she died.

Ah, she was a brave soul! Ill and suffering as she was, she felt we were ill too, and held out until the last, when, without one

word, she gave us the youngest boy and hurried away, lying quietly down on her bed, where she slept away her life, never speaking again nor moving, save to make a slight protest with her hand when she heard the familiar sound of Muriel's cot being moved aside, because, for the first time since she was born, she was to sleep beside another's bed. Here we watched, as well as tears would let us, her small coffin travel from our door, through the snow, and crowned by holly; and here the children ran up and down the passage calling for Nan, and seeking her who had never failed to answer them before. O, how dreadful it was to turn over her neatly-kept things, and discover all the money that had ever been paid her rolled up together and labelled for the eldest child! She had never needed to buy garments, because we had loved her so. But relations came down, and, of course, they had the money, yet we hardly expected to find we must buy back the very brooch we gave her with the children's hair in, or that they grudged her the possession of her very worn wedding-ring, so often lent to us in our own childhood, when we solemnly married each other on wet Sundays; our eldest brother—dead now sometime—clad in the longest night-garment he could borrow, and the youngest acting as clerk, a part he thought small and duly hated, but which he had to enact or else take none in the comedy at all. We buried it with her—the emblem of a married life, where the brave soul had had to turn out and work to keep the husband who beat her, and finally drank himself to death. Yet she was proud of her status; and so we were fain she should carry the badge thereof to her grave. Ah, who

will keep that grave clear from weeds now, or who take flowers there, as the children did, because she was so fond of them? Our uprooting has been for one hundred and fifty miles; and we fear that no hands will do that work for her as we used to do.

The very bedrooms are sacred places in the old house. We did not like them at first, for they seemed deserted and cold; and we felt very much like two drops in the ocean, beginning our single yet dual life together in the big family place, when the father had retired from work to a little house farther down the village, and we erected baize doors to conceal the fact that emptiness reigned in those silent chambers, that we were not numerous enough to fill or rich enough to furnish duly; indeed, we were not rich at all, and were much looked down upon by some of the family who were gorgeous in plate-glass and grass-green silk and gold chairs and tables, and who thought scorn of our white dimities and freshly-starched muslin-petticoated toilet-tables and draperies, and our little drawing-room, where all the ornaments were valuable pictures given us as wedding presents by our artistic connections, of which we were, perhaps, unduly proud, and our new relations most unduly scornful. Yet, now that we have all that we have secretly longed for, we have not obtained or taken with us all the thousand and one sentiments that entwined themselves round each corner there, round each room, that one after the other had to be rescued from spiders and oblivion, as our family increased, and became so numerous, that instead of being lost in the place we were most terribly cramped for room therein. We had love and laughter, hopes and fears, joys and

sorrows; but beyond 'Nan's' loss, Death's angel kept his foot from out our door, and there is no shadow of a coffin in those portals. Good news came, or bad, yet there we were always together. Here there is a possibility of anything, for nothing good or bad has occurred as yet, and all our surroundings lack still the sanctification that time alone can bring—want badly the 'usedness' that gives the home-feelings, and makes any house feel like an old and tried friend. O, how dull the days were, buried in the country, we say, trying to make ourselves believe all is well, now we can shake hands with London whenever we wish. But even while forcing ourselves to remember vividly the long dark hours from four to ten at night—ten called by us profanely the order of release, for then we could go to bed, feeling we were not so lazy after all; when we knew nothing short of an earthquake would bring any one within our doors until another day had dawned; and that the Queen herself might die, but we should not know of it until the day's paper strolled in, carried by a small and dilatory boy at twelve o'clock,—we think, with a faint feeling of home-sickness, of the long purple range of hills, where the lights and shadows altered daily and nightly, and formed one gorgeous, never-failing feast of colour. We recollect just when we don't want to the exact sound of the sea as it heaved to and fro over the bar at the mouth of the harbour; we smell the seaweed, dank with clinging moisture; we note the gray seagull as it drifts by through the fog with its weird sharp cry; we remember how the rooks flapped heavily along over the tops of the fir-trees in the hollow to their homes in the trees below the hills; we catch

the yellow glow of the sunset in the river, that lies like a twisted ribbon thrown by a careless hand on the wide purple heath; and we can hardly believe that we are in the proud position just now of having obtained our heart's desire, and returned to end our days close to our native place.

In thirteen years one makes a great many memories, one advances a great deal on that road of life called experience; and one entwines one's surroundings in one's heart-strings very closely, even without knowing it. Disagreeable things one gets used to. Draughts that one knows exactly where to expect can be circumvented; and the ingenuity we had to exercise to get out of their way, the patience or impatience with which we bore the disagreeables, endeared them to us, and soon use caused them to be necessary to us; for it was quite pleasing to be always in possession of something that really no one could expect us to bear without thus exercising an Englishman's privilege.

If uprooting be so hard a thing to us, who have nothing to lose save associations and the hills, and all to gain, what must it be to those who are in exactly opposite positions? 'I've moved a many,' said the man who assisted nobly at our uprooting; 'but the hardest jobs I have is to move clergymen's widders; they comes back and back, and clings even to the door-posteses in their last partings. They hinders us terrible; but those pore souls, they generally has to part with half their furniture. The places they go to are so much smaller than the parsonages. One sees hups and downs, indeed, a-moving famblies, and it ain't often one moves as well as you're doing. You've lost nothing, and

gained a heap; and let me tell you,' added he, handing out our pet lamp, that looked small and shabby now it was away from the tiny hall that it had illuminated so well, 'as a hint, if you moves again, never drive a nail; allus screw in your things. That there man of yours at home don't know his work, and he've druv nails in where nothing but a screw should ever go. Don't forget; and next time it will be a real pleasure to move you.'

Next time! No, nothing save misfortune shall ever make us move again. Lost nothing! Have we not lost more than we shall ever gain? Did not our dear, dear friend come to us in the old house, and talk cheerily whenever we were dull or ailing, or a little weary of the cold water that was thrown on our schemes for bettering our surroundings! of the miserable tittle-tattle that investigated our closest domestic arrangements or misinterpreted our actions, as is the habit of gossips in a little country town? Yet she can never come here; this mirror can never reflect her keen clear glance, her sharply-cut features, her soft gray hair, for she too sleeps beneath the hills, and we shall hear her voice no more, have no remembrance of her, like a faint sweet odour of bygone flowers, in these bigger, prettier rooms of ours. Through the old rooms troop shadows hand in hand; the very walls seemed to have imbibed something of our joys and sorrows. Yet let us remember we were bored and hampered by our surroundings, and we are better off now. We are only uprooted; but who, save those who have been uprooted too, can enter into our feelings? We think our flowers can. On the old wall, just by the malt-house, there was a fine young

Maréchal Niel rose; he has been transplanted, and, being vigorous and youthful, is doing well, swaggering mightily and expanding vigorously, and will soon cover the house here, if we let him have his way. And then there was another rose, quite old; yet though he never really flourished (for, said our gardener, he never had a fair chance, soil and position being both uncongenial) he bore lovely dark-red roses, compact and beautiful; and we could not endure to leave him behind to the ruthless hand of our successors, so we took him away; but he was too old to move, and now he is dead. No rich congenial soil could save him, torn from the surroundings

he had struggled in and become used to. And so, methinks, 'tis even with human flowers; and if uprooting must come, well, let it come when one is young enough to be sure—as mortals can be sure of aught—to be able to hallow the home with memories; for has one no chance of doing that, one will surely die much quicker than he would have done left alone. No one can tell, who has not tried it, how long it takes to warm a nest; no one can tell how hard it is to make one's roots strike deep and healthily into new soil, until he has tried for himself the sensation of being for a while uprooted.

J. E. PANTON.

LOVE'S LOST DAY.

WHEN thou and I are parted, presently,
 This dead day's ghost, with white accusing face,
 Shall walk among our harsh unpitying days,
 Saying, 'For tenderness love fashioned me,
 And, lo! ye did defame my deity,
 Reft me of sweetness, took away my grace,
 And set a horror in my fair self's place—
 That self no tears can make again to be.'

But when, for one of us, vain days go by,
 The while the other sleeps beneath the flowers,
 Heedless of sunshine, or soft April showers,
 'Look ever in my eyes,' this day shall cry,
 Wherein, as in deep streams, reflected lie
 Love's murdered irrecoverable hours.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

DOLLY'S END.

'Farewell; and on Tuesday next expect me in London among the booksellers. —
Milton to Gull.

WITH every passing year we lose some landmarks of a well-nigh forgotten London. Few districts have suffered more in this respect than the immediate neighbourhood of St. Paul's. The recent demolition of a once-famous coffee-house—one of the two or three yet remaining here—makes it not inopportune to say a few words upon the traditions that linger around. Ave Maria-lane, Paternoster-row, Old Change, with Carter-lane and Creed-lane, bounded the former cathedral precincts. In the wall which ran along these streets were six gates—at Ludgate-street, Paul's-alley leading into Paternoster-row, Canon-alley, Cheapside, Watling-street (St. Augustine's Gate), and Paul's Chain to the south of the cathedral. By the south-eastern corner of Newgate-street stood the church of St. Michael ad Bladum, corruptly styled *Le Querne* from the ancient corn-market there. St. Michael's was originally built in the reign of King Edward III.; at its east end stood the old cross in Westchepe, taken down in the thirteenth year of King Richard II. (1390). Repaired and beautified by the parishioners in 1617, the church, as it appears in Tresswell's print of 1585, was destroyed by the Great Fire, and its site 'laide into the streete.' The Little Conduit in Westchepe by Paule's Gate, which took the place of the old cross, remained until the year 1727.

At the north-western corner of the precincts stood the Bishop's palace, often used for the reception of princes. King Edward III.

and his queen were entertained here after the splendid tournament at Smithfield, where, as Philip de Comines tells us, the Burgundian knights were mightily overthrown. The youthful King Edward V. also lodged here just before his appointed coronation. The town house or 'inn' of the bishops was demolished in the middle of the seventeenth century, as well as the parish church of St. Gregory's, against the south-western end of the former cathedral, close to the spot occupied by Queen Anne's statue. Paul's Cross was used for proclamations, with other public ceremonies civil and ecclesiastical. A pulpit was next attached to it, hexagonal in shape, 'covered with lead, elevated upon a flight of stone steps, and surmounted by a large cross.' Learned divines preached here every Sunday in the forenoon, the congregation sitting in the open air. In bad weather the sermons were delivered in 'the shrowds,' a place, according to Strype, by the side of the cathedral affording shelter. In the words of Dean Milman, the cross was 'the pulpit not only of the cathedral; it might almost be said, as preaching became more popular and began more and more to rule the public mind, to have become that of the Church of England. . . . It was not only the great scene for the display of eloquence by distinguished preachers; it was that of many public acts relating to ecclesiastical affairs—some of mingled cast, some simply political.' We may picture a crowd witnessing the public penance—

'in her kirtle onlie'—of the wife of Shore, a Lombard-street goldsmith—one who, with Katharine Sedley, might have

'Cursed the form that pleased a king.'

We may watch Bishop Stokesley order Tindall's Testament to be cast into the flames, or hear Bishop Fisher (now shortly to be canonised by the Romish Church) fulminate the Pope's sentence upon one Martin Eleutherius. We listen with contempt to Ridley branding as bastards the royal sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, though then on his way in secret to Cambridge to throw himself at the former's feet; by and by we see the latter drive up in her coach, one of the first used in this country, on the 24th day of November 1588, to hear the sermon of Dr. Pierce, Bishop of Salisbury, for the dispersal of the Armada. Here the Pope had been denounced in King Henry VIII.'s reign; in that of his daughter Mary, the Protestants accursed. King Charles I. was the last sovereign to attend in public at the cross, on the occasion of his eldest son's birth. The delivery of discourses continued up to the outbreak of the Civil War, when Pennington, Lord Mayor, 'a willing instrument,' destroyed it, by order of Parliament, in the year 1643. The preachers lodged at the Shunamite's House. Readers of Walton's *Lives* will recollect how Richard Hooker came to marry the daughter of Mrs. Churchman, who kept the house in or about 1581; the marriage brought him little happiness.

'No wonder your school raises a storm, for it is like the wooden horse in which armed Greeks were hidden for the ruin of barbarous Troy.' Thus writes Sir Thomas More to Dean Colet, the first reformer of English education. In

his school, founded in the year 1509, and dedicated originally to the child Jesus, the new grammar compiled by his friend Erasmus and other scholars superseded the old methods of instruction. The first master was Lilly, composer of the familiar *Propriæ quæ Maribus*. Besides Milton, there were educated at St. Paul's School, Bentley, his critic; Camden and Leland, the antiquaries; the Gales (Charles, Roger, and Samuel), antiquaries also; with John Strype, ecclesiastical historian; Sir Anthony Denny, the only man who had the courage to tell King Henry VIII. he was dying; Halley, the astronomer; John Duke of Marlborough; Samuel Pepys; the reputed author of *Junius's Letters*; and Elliston, the actor. Jeffreys, then a Pauline watching the judges go to dine at the Guildhall, surprised his father, who purposed to bind him apprentice to a mercer, by vowing that he too would one day be a guest of the Lord Mayor, and would die Lord Chancellor. Milton's usher was Alexander Gill, a Latin poet of no mean celebrity. In a letter to Gill, written in early life, Milton penned the passage which I quote above. Placed under the conduct of the Mercers' Company, of which Colet's father was a member, and endowed with estates in Buckinghamshire of about 120*l*. yearly in value, the school's annual income now exceeds 13,000*l*. The number of scholars was originally fixed at that of the miraculous draught of fishes; under the new scheme, one thousand boys, with four hundred girls, are ultimately to be provided for at South Kensington. The existing school and masters' houses were built in 1823, from the designs of George Smith.

In olden times St. Paul's Churchyard was famous for its

trees, and the booksellers' shops which up to the year 1760 were distinguished by their several signs. At the White Greyhound were published by John Harrison the first editions of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*; at the Flower de Luce and Crown, the first edition of his *Merry Wives of Windsor*; at the Green Dragon, that of his *Merchant of Venice*; at the Fox, of his *Richard II.*; at the Angel, of his *Richard III.*; at the Spread Eagle, of his *Troilus and Cressida*; at the Sun, of his *Titus Andronicus*; and at the Red Bull, of his *King Lear*. The Bible and Sun, then No. 62, was kept by John Newbery, the publisher, illustrious, not for his great authors, his dinners, or his wealth, but for his children's books, and who, with his nephew Francis, was the patron of Oliver Goldsmith. Hence, amongst other precious volumes—dear delectable histories in sixpenny liliputian books resplendently bound in the flowered and gilt Dutch paper that cannot now be reproduced—were given to the juvenile world the immortal histories of 'Tommy Trip,' 'Tom Thumb's Folio,' 'Giles Gingerbread,' 'Tom Telescope,' 'Be Merry and Wise,' and in April 1765, from—as there is good evidence for believing—the pen of Goldsmith, the 'History of Little Goody Two Shoes,' otherwise called 'Mrs. Margery Two Shoes,' inscribed to all young gentlemen and ladies who are good, or intend to be good, by their old friend in St. Paul's Churchyard. Writing to Coleridge (1802), Charles Lamb says: "Goody Two Shoes" is almost out of print. Mrs. Barbauld's stuff has banished all the old classics of the nursery, and the shopman at Newbery's hardly deigned to reach them off an old exploded corner of a shelf

when Mary asked for them. . . . Science has succeeded to poetry no less in the little walks of children than with men. . . . Think what you would have been now if, instead of being fed with tales and old wives' fables in childhood, you had been crammed with geography and natural history! John Newbery, as proprietor of Dr. James's Powder—the regimen for the lack of which little Margery's father, forced from his family and seized with a violent fever in a place where Dr. James's Powder was not to be had, died miserably, and which hastened the end of Goldsmith himself—yet survives to memory in the firms of John Newbery & Sons, Newgate-street, and Griffith & Farran, booksellers.

At No. 72 St. Paul's Churchyard (now the linendraper's) John Johnson published Cowper's first volume of poems, his *Table Talk* and *Task*, with the *Olney Hymns* for Newton.* Stowe chronicles that Paternoster-row derives its name from the stationers and text-writers there, dealing mainly in religious books, though also in horn-books, or A B C's, paternosters, aves, creeds, graces, and so on. It is probable that it is so called from the rosary or paternoster makers themselves. We find record of one Robert Nikke, 'paternoster-maker and citizen,' here in the reign of King Henry IV. The booksellers did not migrate to the Row until the beginning of last century. Strype, writing in 1720, says that the street, before the Fire, was taken up by eminent mercers, silk-men,

* Cowper's account of his three hares first appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for June 1784. In the following December was printed in that magazine the epitaph on his hare 'Tiney' beginning, 'Here lies whom bound did ne'er pursue.' His *John Gilpin* is printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for November 1783.

and lace-men; and that these removing after the Fire to Ludgate-street, and Bedford, Henrietta, and King streets, Covent Garden, made way for a diversity of trades-people, chiefly tire-women and milliners, who sold top-knots and 'the like dressings for the females.' In an edition of his history, published in 1754, thirteen years after his death, it is added, there were then many shops of mercers' silk-men, and, at the upper end, of eminent printers, booksellers, and publishers.

Amongst the more celebrated coffee-houses in this quarter were the St. Paul's, the Queen's Arms, Child's, the Chapter, the Mitre, the Goose and Gridiron, and Dolly's Chop-house. The first-named stood by the archway to the Deanery, occupying, with Truby's tavern, the site of the old Brew-house and the Paul's Head tavern. In the *Tatler* the sign of the Goose and Gridiron in London House-yard is ascribed to a satirical Boniface in ridicule of the then favourite name Swan and Harp, the house having had pretensions in the time of a previous landlord to being a 'music-house.' Others affirm this sign was meant as a set-off against the concerts established at the Castle in Pater-noster-row by Greene and Talbot Young, members of the cathedral choir. The Goose and Gridiron formed the head-quarters of the St. Paul's Freemasons' Lodge, over which Wren presided for eighteen years during the rebuilding of St. Paul's. The Mitre—also in London House-yard—ranked as the most ancient music-house in the City. It was kept by Robert Herbert, whose cabinets of rarities, being purchased by Sir Hans Sloane, became the nucleus of the British Museum. Child's, on the southern side of the churchyard, was much frequented by the clergy

in the reign of Queen Anne, and by proctors from the Commons. Dr. Mead, with the Fellows of the Royal Society, often repaired hither. Addison* refers to Child's, telling the story of the honest country gentleman who mistook all in scarves for doctors of divinity, and entitled, therefore, to 'the style of "doctor" from their land-ladies and the boy at Child's.' At the Queen's Arms Garrick met his City club, including Samuel Sharpe, a surgeon, Patterson, a solicitor, Draper, a bookseller, and Clutterbuck, a mercer. These constituted his standing counsel in all matters of theatrical management. Here Dr. Johnson started his City club, from which, with a thrust at Wilkes, he stipulated for the exclusion of patriots, and where he renewed acquaintance with some who, thirty years before, had belonged to his club in Ivy-lane. The booksellers principally resorted to the Chapter Coffee-house, as well as University men, country parsons, and college dons. Goldsmith often came here. Chatterton speaks of it more than once in his letters to Bristol. 'I am quite familiar,' he says, 'at the Chapter-house, and know all the geniuses there: a character is now unnecessary; an author carries his character in his pen.' Again, writing (14th May 1770) from the King's Bench, he mentions a friend he meets there who undertook to introduce him to the young Duke of Northumberland, with a view to his foreign tour; 'but, alas,' he adds, 'I spake no tongue but my own.'† This was the nobleman (Sir Hugh

* Vide *Spectator*, Nos. 1 and 609.

† Two or three months later Chatterton was found dead one morning by Mrs. Angell, his landlady, in the garret of the house in Brooke-street, Holborn (lately pulled down), which then commanded a view of the dome of St. Paul's. The register of St. Andrew's, that chronicles his

Smithson, Bart., created Earl Percy and Duke of Northumberland in 1766) to whom Goldsmith pleaded, not for himself, but for his brother Henry in Ireland. Such a trait alone should redeem his memory from a thousand acts of heedlessness and folly. The booksellers held their trade-meetings in a long, low, dingy room at the Chapter. The coteries of the Wittenagemot and Wet-Paper Clubs were joined by, amongst others, Dr. Buchanan, author of *State Medicine*; Walker, the rhetorician and lexicographer; Lowndes, the electrician; Paterson, who taught Pitt mathematics; and Bushy, the musician. Dolly's Chop-house succeeded a coffee-house and tavern which, already of great repute, escaped the Fire in 1666. On the accession of Queen Anne, the tavern took her head as its sign, giving the name of Queen Anne's Head—passage to the alley from Newgate-street into the Row. The tavern had long been the 'common house' of the canonists and Doctors of Civil Law. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Dr. Harvey, Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and Dean of Arches, purchased for them a lease of Mountjoy House, on whose site Doctors' Commons was built after the Fire. The story runs that the Queen gave the tavern as a marriage-portion to Dorothy, a favourite kitchen-maid, on which occasion it changed its name; and that she now and then visited her old servant there. The praises of the beefsteaks and gill-ale at Dolly's are celebrated

burial in the graveyard of the workhouse in Shoe-lane, contains a notice of the baptism of Savage, who, born in Fox-court, leading out of Gray's Inn-lane into Brooke-street, died in Bristol gaol. By another coincidence, two next-door neighbours at Holloway are named Rowley and Chatterton.

by Bonnell Thornton; whilst Wilkes, with Dr. Fordyce, Buchan, and Dr. Gower, and, in later days, Brougham, Denman, and Orsini, ranked among its patrons. The oak-panelled chop-room, fine staircase, and the two floors of cellarage, with several other features of a bygone age, were highly esteemed by antiquarians. One of the two ancient fireplaces, a former sign painted on metal, and a posthumous likeness, after Kneller, of Dolly herself—attributed to Gainsborough—are all that remain of this chop-house; the building was pulled down a few months ago for the extension of a warehouse in Newgate-street.

Thus one by one do the old haunts disappear from a scene upon which they once opened their doors so kindly. The coffee-house clubs described in the *Spectator* and *Guardian*, the *Tatler* and the *Lounger*, with 'Button's' and the 'Cocoa Tree,' are gone for ever. Nevertheless, Sir Roger, passing through New Inn from his lodgings in Soho-square exactly at five, crossing through Russell-court, and taking a turn at 'Wills's' before the play begins, Captain Sentrey, Will Honeycomb, or the Benchman who knew Jack Ogle, are to some no less real than they who throng the streets this day; still can I imagine that

'Supper and friends expect me at the Rose;'

whilst walking down Paternoster-row, the signs of Aldus and the Bible and Crown overhead, Bibles innumerable on either hand, we may remember that Luther's works were burnt by the Defender of the Faith in the churchyard hard by.

W. E. MILLIKEN.

FAIRIES.

'The Good People.'

FAR from our lives in seeming,
Far beyond sound or sight,
Yet in our waking dreaming
Visiting us by night ;
Hiding from garish noonday,
Shrinking from jest and jar,
Gliding adown the moon-ray,
Beckoning from the star ;
Into the chamber trooping,
Sad where we sit and still,
Over our bowed heads stooping,
 wooing us to their will !
Floating around the embers,
Haloed with glowworm sheen,
Wreathing translucent members
Robed in transparent green.
Gathering ever nearer,
Mystic messenger-elves !
Bringing back clearer, dearer
Dreams we have dreamt ourselves ;
Chiding mid sweet caressing,
Cheering our craven mood,
Blending reproach with blessing,
Working us grace and good !
Freeing from dullard doubting,
Clearing our eyes to see,
Morbid misgivings scouting,
Telling of things to be—
Loveliest things all stainless,
Fathomless joys all pure,
Perfected lives all painless,
Pardon and peace and cure !
Vowing earth's saddest stories
In gladness shall issue yet,
Throwing earth's hidden glories
Eternity's gems are set,
Singing, the fairy legions
Drift beyond sight or sound,
Winging to wondrous regions,
Where shall our quest be found !
Eden, the kingdom olden,
Eden, the ever-new,
Guardeth each vision golden,
Even till *all* come true !
Sought we by sun and starlight ?
Strove we mid flame and ice ?
Lo ! in the Fair Land's far light,
Love, which is Paradise !

ATTIE PIGOTT-CARLETON.



JOHN LINNELL.

See p. 217.



THE LINNELL AND ROSSETTI PICTURES AT BURLINGTON HOUSE.

(*With Two Portraits.*)

THIS year the Royal Academy Exhibition of loan pictures has more than usual interest, containing, as the Exhibition does, not only choice pieces of old art, but special selections from the works of John Linnell and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. It is always pleasurable to meet with the productions of John Linnell, one of the most sympathetic and unsophisticated of English landscape painters; and it will afford gratification to the admirers of his genius to find in the collection so full a proportion of his most characteristic works. The Linnell pictures include 'The Disobedient Prophet,' 'Under the Hawthorn Tree,' 'The Last Gleam before the Storm,' 'The Fallen Monarch,' 'Quoit Players,' 'Fine Evening after Rain,' 'Crossing the Bridge,' and 'Near Windsor Forest.' In addition to a large number of the master's landscapes, there are more than twenty illustrations of his qualities in portraiture. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, not having been an exhibitor at the Academy or elsewhere, save on one or two occasions at obscure exhibitions in the early period of his career, his pictures come before the public with the charm and force of novelty. Moreover, the lover of art has now opportunity to become acquainted with the specific qualities of a painter, to whose influence the æsthetic school owes its origin. From the foregoing facts it is not too much to say that the 1883 Academy Exhibition of loan pictures is one of exceptional interest.

Linnell's life and labours will
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not soon be forgotten. His career has much connected with it exceedingly interesting, and well worthy emulation. There was peculiar correspondence between the man's nature and the man's work—conscientiousness, simplicity, vigour, ardent sympathy, and deep religious feeling. Whatever work he did was shaped by a keen intelligence, and turned out with all the painstaking of which he was capable. His powers in drawing and colouring were of high order; and his strong feeling for nature is especially discernible in his transcripts of simple rustic scenes, as in 'The Woodlands' (12); or 'Woodcutters' (19); or 'The Sand-Cart' (58); or 'Noonday Rest' (68). Linnell's masterly methods of dealing with the effects of light in his landscapes cannot be too highly praised. This power of the artist is very conspicuous in the red sunset sky represented in 'The Sheep Fold' (54); in the serene and mellow sunset-hues steeping hills and water in the richly-coloured 'On Summer Eve by Haunted Stream' (82); in 'Under the Hawthorn Tree' (10), where, in the mid-distance, rises a thickly-wooded slope touched with sunny radiance; in the splendid 'Harvest' (42), where a wide expanse of water is illuminated by the westering solar fire; or in 'The Last Gleam before the Storm' (9), where a sombre and threatening sky is lit up by an intensely-strong gleam of sunshine. How well, too, the artist could use his brush, in the management of aerial effects, will be observed, as

landscape after landscape is examined. A noticeable example of the way in which Linnell could produce a representation of an unusually clear atmosphere is to be found in the picture (31) 'A Summer Evening,' the view being that of a part of Regent's Park, with boys bathing at a pond in the foreground. Few English painters seem to have so imported the very spirit of rustic life into pictures as did John Linnell. Looking at some of his representations of country scenes and country occupations, it needs no great effort of the imagination to transport oneself to commons where sheep are grazing, or to wooded dells where labourers are moving timber. Sometimes we find our way into sweet pastoral nooks, like those where Orlando listened to Rosalind's banter, and where rises the odour of fresh grass, and the blackbird's whistle breaks the stillness. Or, as the autumnal afternoon wanes into evening, we walk through quiet lanes and see the old world grange:

'An English home—gray twilight poured
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep—all things in order
stored,
A haunt of ancient peace.'

In producing poetic landscapes Linnell, perhaps, has only been excelled by one other English painter, the great and incomparable Turner. In this department of art John Linnell displayed originality, and frequently fine pathos. An instance occurs in the landscape entitled 'The Disobedient Prophet' (66). It represents an incident described in the thirteenth chapter of the First Book of Kings, and the work is replete with tragic feeling. In the foreground lies the corpse between the ass and lion, while on the right hand is the 'man of God,' and with him his servant

and ass. The rocky heights behind are topped by funereal-looking pines, and the western sky glows with lurid light from the sinking sun. The aspect of nature introduced in the picture is in exact keeping with the incident represented. Among other poetic landscapes in the collection are 'The Eve of the Deluge' (8); 'Flight into Egypt' (32); 'St. John the Baptist preaching in the Wilderness' (39); 'Ulysses landing at Ithaca' (64); and 'Abraham entertaining Angels' (89). Linnell, in the earlier part of his professional career, painted a far greater proportion of portraits than landscapes. It has been remarked of his earlier portraiture, that it was drawn with the firmness of an engraver, modelled with a sculptor's knowledge of form, and painted with the intelligence of an artist trained by Mulready. Among other portraits by Linnell at Burlington House are those of Sir Thomas Baring (2); Thomas Carlyle, dated 1844 (16); Rev. John Martin, a very interesting work (36); Lady Baring (41); Portrait of the Painter, executed in 1860, and the work is unfinished (50); Sir Alexander Wall Calcott, R.A. (90); Mrs. Sarah Austin (106); Thomas Phillips, R.A. (113); and William Bray (119). The Linnell collection at Burlington House, inclusive of water-colours, miniatures, and sketches, comprises one hundred and sixty-one works. Though John Linnell died but little more than a year since, he began his professional work early in the century. The son of a Bloomsbury picture-dealer and wood-carver, he was born in 1792, and lived to the ripe age of ninety years. He died 20th January 1882. Linnell's genius early manifested itself, and he was sent to the Royal Academy schools at

Somerset House in 1805. He was also a pupil of John Varley's, at whose establishment he had for fellow-student Mulready, from whom he learned much. Linnell when but fifteen years old exhibited at the Academy. When the authorities of that institution took some steps to award him the honour of A.R.A., the painter, remembering old slights, firmly declined the compliment. It should be stated that Linnell was never a member of the Royal Academy.

The thought must occur to some, after they have inspected the paintings of Dante Rossetti, that there is little in them, whether of subject or manner, which is likely to evoke admiration from average-minded exhibition visitors. And it must not be forgotten that average-minded exhibition visitors include many cultivated gentlemen, and many shrewd intelligent men not devoid of education. Such people would have no difficulty in giving their reasons for admiring a picture like Mr. Millais's 'Boyhood of Raleigh,' where, on the Hoe at Plymouth, the sun-browned sailor, pointing over the ocean, tells the fascinated lad sitting at his feet the story of a fierce fight with the Spaniards; or for expressing pleasure at one of Mr. Hook's sea-shore scenes, with their busy fisher-lads, and the gulls flying out far from the cliffs; or for yielding to the charm of some sweet womanly face looking from a canvas of Mr. Sant'a. The people to whom we allude cannot enter into the merits, nor can they catch the significance, of the greater portion of Rossetti's art. It is for those who have been initiated into the mysteries of æsthetics. Rossetti has painted no pictures that tell their own stories, or dealt

with subjects that are impressive or interesting save to poetic or highly-cultured persons. His mind was fascinated by the old Greek myths, the thirteenth and fourteenth century semi-mystic Italian poetry, and our own early legends, romances, and saintly stories, so that subjects from those sources which he interprets can only be adequately enjoyed by such minds as are stocked with erudition, and, in addition, possess poetic insight. Many of Rossetti's pictures, too, are full of symbols admirably proper from his artistic standpoint, but exceedingly perplexing to those unacquainted with their significance. Nor can it be denied that the artist was too much the servant of an unhealthy sentiment, which inclined him to express much in some of his pictures which can only be described as dolorous and wearisome. It is so with many of his presentments of women—wan, sad-eyed creatures, who might be the phantoms of an opium dream. Why, too, did the artist model so many faces from one type, that of the 'Proserpine' (314), a picture of remarkable merit? It must occur to the unprejudiced that Rossetti's chief faults were monotony and morbid sentiment. In the illustrations of his favourite type of sensuous womanly beauty, there is undue repetition of ruddy tresses and protruding lips. The artist's sympathy with melancholy subjects is noticeable in the pictures referring to Dante and the dead Beatrice (318, 321, and 362); 'Found' (287); 'Heart of the Night' (290); 'Paolo and Francesca' (291); 'Proserpine' (314); 'Dis Manibus,' illustrating the funeral rites performed by a Roman widow at certain periods of the year at her husband's tomb (317); 'La

Pia,' taken from the story of the youthful wife of Nello della Pietra of Siena, who was confined by her husband in a fortress in the fever-haunted swamps of the 'Maremma' (319); 'Death of Lady Macbeth' (335); 'Fazio's Mistress' (351); 'Hamlet and Ophelia' (354); 'The First Madness of Ophelia' (356); and some others. The influence Dante Rossetti has exercised over English art for more than thirty years can best be ascertained by a study of his works now brought together for exhibition. It seems, when first looking round the galleries, as if many of the works must have been shown before at the Academy, at the Grosvenor, or in other exhibitions, so familiar do they appear. When Rossetti's work, however, is examined, the illusion is dispelled, so unique is his treatment of subjects, and so rare is the workmanship. But disciples have displayed good powers of imitation, and have done their best to prove their devotion to the master. Not only can his influence be traced in painting, but in all things associated with the æsthetic fashion of the day, in certain architecture, art decoration, furniture, and even costume. That Rossetti was a poet is discernible in all his paintings, his imaginative grasp of subjects, and the spirit of beauty which he sheds over them, being undeniable. Some of the pictures most suffused in the hues of his poetic sentiment are 'The Blue Bower' (303), the figure of a lady in a green robe playing a musical instrument; 'The Blessed Damozel' (313)—

'The blessed damozel leaned out
From the golden bar of heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven';

also in the two-compartment pic-

ture, 'Salutatio Beatricis' (289), in the first division of which is a representation of Dante ascending a flight of steps, Beatrice and two other ladies descending, Florence being seen in the background; while in the other division is a representation of their meeting in paradise, the poet on one side and Beatrice on the other, followed by two figures with musical instruments; and likewise in the beautiful work, 'The Girlhood of Mary Virgin' (286), full of light, tenderness, and chaste feeling; the work containing the figures of the Virgin, St. Anna, St. Joachim, and a scarlet-winged little angel, who is watering a lily. In the background there is a landscape full of repose and charm. St. Anna is a portrait of the artist's mother, and the Virgin, of his sister Christina. The picture is full of symbolism. The 'Paolo and Francesca' (291) is impressive. The painter's gifts as a colourist have been admired by those differing from his school of art. In the triptych 'Altar-piece of Llandaff Cathedral' (296), the centre is occupied with a representation of the Adoration of the Magi; the left wing containing a figure of David as shepherd, a sling and stone in his hand; the right wing containing a figure of David as king, playing on the harp; the picture glows, and almost seems to burn, with colour. Contrasted with this work stands the large and sombre picture entitled 'Dante's Dream' (318), illustrative of a passage in the 'Vita Nuova,' in which the poet describes his dream on the day of the death of Beatrice Portinari. The colour in this work is profoundly grave and pathetic. In each work of the artist the peculiar harmony of colour and subject is strikingly obtained. Rossetti's power of drawing, though inferior to his

faculty as a colourist, is seen to advantage in the greater number of his pictures. There are two brilliant and beautiful pictures, 'Monna Vanna' (302), half figure of a lady against a green background, and 'The Beloved' (297), a bride, with four ladies by her, and an African girl holding up a vase of flowers; the works being characteristic of the artist at his best in design, drawing, colouring, and sentiment. Rossetti, from the peculiar choice of his subjects and from his subtle and original method of interpreting them, can never be popular; but to those with a feeling for truly fine art his works will have intense interest.

Dante Rossetti was born in London on the 12th of May 1828, and died on April 9th, 1882. His mother was the daughter of Polidori Alfieri's secretary, and his father was Gabriele Rossetti, who had settled in this country, after vicissitudes occasioned by his

efforts to promote the cause of Liberalism in Naples. Gabriele Rossetti became Professor of Italian at King's College, and subsequently earned literary distinction as an elucidator of the writings of Dante. The son received his education at King's College School, and having shown from early years a bias for art pursuits, he was sent as a pupil to Cary's Art Academy, and soon obtained admission to study in the Antique School of the Royal Academy, which was the only connection he had with it. In 1848 Rossetti, with other young and aspiring men drawn together by art sympathies, formed the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The year following he sent a picture, 'The Girlhood of the Virgin,' to a West-end exhibition, and (excepting a few drawings) never exhibited anything else. His gift as a poet manifested itself in early life, equally with his gift in drawing and painting.

ANECDOTE CORNER.

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY J. PALGRAVE SIMPSON—CHARLES HERVEY—
EDWARD DRURY—SURGEON-GENERAL COWEN—WILLMOTT DIXON—
H. BARTON BAKER—THE ANECDOTE HUNTER—THE EDITOR—AND
OTHERS.

How Macaulay extinguished a Bore.

MACAULAY used to tell the following story of an incident which happened to him during his residence in India. He arrived late one night, desperately tired, at the bungalow of the chaplain of an out-of-the-way station, and, having supped, was desirous of getting to bed as soon as possible. But his host, having got hold of a 'lion,' was determined to make the most of him. He at once mounted his favourite hobby, and stopping his impatient guest, who in vain tried to escape, said, in a tone of great solemnity, 'Mr. Macaulay, I positively cannot let you retire until you state your opinion as to the number of the Beast in the Revelation.' To confess ignorance would have ruined

his reputation for omniscience, and perhaps have exposed him to the risk of a lengthy exposition. 'I was driven into a corner,' Macaulay would say, in telling the story, 'and answered on the spot, "I have no doubt as to what was foreshadowed by the mystical number" (666)—"the British House of Commons; the members elected, 658; the three clerks at the table, the serjeant-at-arms and the deputy-serjeant, the librarian, and the two doorkeepers making the exact number, 666;" and rushed to my couch, leaving my host dazed and bewildered as much at the promptitude and volubility of my reply, as at the startling novelty of the theory it contained.'

Lord Hertford on Bores.

THE Right Honourable John Wilson Croker could hardly be called, in the social sense of the word, a 'popular' man. Gronow told me one day that the late Lord Hertford, on hearing an intimate friend of his compared, by the editor of Boswell, on account of

his prodigious appetite, to a boa constrictor—an opinion obstinately maintained by him against every other person in the room—quietly remarked that, of the two, he decidedly preferred the serpent in question to a bore contradictor.

C. H.

Some Stories of Bishop Wilberforce.

THERE is a rather disappointing dearth of good stories of the late Bishop Wilberforce in the third volume of his Life, just published; and the following, therefore, which are, I think, so far new that they have not yet seen the light in

print, may not be unacceptable. It is well known that the Bishop did a considerable part of his correspondence on the railway. For that purpose he used always to secure a compartment for himself and friends, if any were travelling

FEELINGS are like chemicals—the more you analyse them the worse they smell. So it is best not to stir them up very much—only enough to convince oneself that they are offensively living—and then look away as far as possible out of oneself for a purifying power; and that we know can only come from Him who holds our hearts in His hands, and can turn us whither He will.—CHARLES KINGSLEY.

with him. Once, at the Horsham Station, two elderly ladies would insist on entering the compartment which the Bishop had secured for himself, declaring that there was plenty of room, and that they had a right to enter. In vain the Bishop tried to shock them (it was the St. Leger Day) by asking for a *Sporting Gazette*, and saying that he supposed a special edition of the *Record* would probably be published, denouncing his wickedness. The ladies would not take the hint, but clamoured to get in. At last the Bishop called the guard, and with imperturbable good-humour said, 'Take these ladies and find them the most comfortable first-class carriage you can, and let them be—by themselves.'

Here is another example of the Bishop's ready wit which his biographer has not given. Dr. Wilberforce was not much of a practical sportsman, but when on a visit at the country-seat of Lord —, during the shooting-season, he was persuaded to join the shooting-party. He entered with considerable zest into the sport as a spectator, and, on his return, the host mentioned that his head gamekeeper was a Dissenter, and although he did not wish to interfere with the religious opinions of his servants, still he confessed that it was an annoyance to him that this man alone, of all his servants, should abstain from going to church; it didn't look well, and he thought perhaps the Bishop,

if he would undertake the task, might talk the matter over, and induce him to become a church-goer. The Bishop laughingly consented, and went the next day to the keeper's cottage. He soon put the good man at his ease by those winning manners which charmed all with whom he came in contact, and gradually led the conversation to the point at issue, until, quite naturally, the question came, 'By the bye, how is it that I don't see you at church? You know it's our duty to look after these things. Surely you don't find anything in the Bible against going to church?'. 'No, my lord,' returned the sturdy Dissenter; 'neither do I find anything in the Bible to warrant a preacher of the Gospel in going out shooting. The Apostles never did.' 'No,' retorted the Bishop. 'True, they had no game in Palestine in those days—they went out fishing instead.'

Apropos of Bishop Wilberforce, I am reminded of an anecdote of his bitter opponent, Lord Westbury, who made the pungent allusion in the House of Lords to the Bishop's style as 'eel-like, oily, and *saponaceous*.' When he was at the Bar there was probably never a more ferocious and overbearing 'leader' than Lord Westbury, then Mr. Bethell. He was the terror of 'juniors,' whom he used to bully in a most unpardonable manner. On two occasions he carried this insulting demeanour so far that the 'junior' waited for his 'leader' outside the

READING without purpose is sauntering, not exercise. More is got from one book on which the thought settles for a definite end in knowledge, than from libraries skimmed over by a wandering eye. A cottage flower gives honey to the bee; a king's garden none to the butterfly.—BULWER LYTTON.

court, and there and then inflicted summary personal chastisement upon Mr. Bethell. In each case the 'junior' was summoned for assault. The provocation, however, was recognised as having been so great and unwarranted that the penalty inflicted was very slight. But not only was Mr. Bethell the terror of the Bar; the Bench too quailed before him. The influence

which he acquired over Vice-Chancellor Sir Lancelot Shadwell was so great as to affect that judge's decisions; and this fact was so notorious that a witty stuff gownsmen propounded a riddle, which became a popular *bon mot* at the Bar: 'Why is Shadwell like King Jeroboam?' 'Because he has set up an idol in Bethell.'

W. D.

Anecdotes of Charles Mathews and John Clayton.

Of no men, probably, have more anecdotes been narrated than of the late Charles Mathews. Everybody who knew him, or, for the matter of that, did not know him, has something to tell of that reckless and vivacious 'chartered libertine' of fortune. Perhaps it is less well known that he was devotedly attached to his mother, who had been a very pretty woman, and who preserved her good looks to an advanced period of life. She had the weakness, however—and there are few women who have it not—to endeavour to conceal her age, and drop, sometimes, twenty years or so. Charley smiled at this little *supercherie*, and even fostered it. He never liked to talk of his mother's age. One day, however, when much pestered on the subject by a friend, he answered impatiently, 'Well, look here! I am fifty-seven years of age; so I suppose we can't put the dear old lady down at less than fifty-nine!'

Charles Mathews, accidentally meeting a gentleman (whom we

will call Mr. Jones) to whom he was indebted in the sum of two hundred pounds, said, 'Ah, Mr. Jones, I owe you two hundred pounds.' Mr. Jones pulled a long face, and, in a lugubrious tone, replied, 'O, don't talk about it.' The vivacious Charles warmly pressed the hand of Mr. Jones, and, in his well-known emphatic manner, replied, 'We won't—we won't!'

Self-possessed as Charles Mathews may be supposed to have been as an actor, he was sometimes rendered very nervous on the stage by loud talking in the private boxes. On these occasions he would frequently address the delinquents in a facetious strain, and obtain the desired silence. Once, when congratulated on his success on thus subduing recalcitrant spectators, he answered, 'Yes, but I was done on one occasion. An old gentleman in a private box had fretted me awfully with his loud talking all the evening. During the last piece he rose and put on his overcoat, still talking at the top of his voice. "I beg your par-

IN many matters of opinion our first and last coincide, though on different grounds; it is the middle stage which is farthest from the truth. Childhood often holds a truth with its feeble fingers, which the grasp of manhood cannot retain—which it is the pride of utmost age to recover.—JOHN RUSKIN.

don," I said; "but the piece is not yet finished." "That's the very reason I am going," was his confounded reply. I was completely sold.'

John Clayton (as the story goes) was more fortunate at Brighton. He was playing his great part of Hugh Trevor in *All for Her*, when in his best scenes he was utterly knocked over by persistent loud talking in a stage-box. Utterly unable to proceed, at last he went

up to the box, and said, 'Ladies and gentlemen, I fear that my performance interrupts your conversation. As soon as I can proceed without distressing you, I shall be happy to resume my part.' The speech was greeted by tremendous applause from the audience, and shouts of 'Turn them out!' The box was mute. One gentleman sought to pick a quarrel with the actor afterwards, but, after a little conversation, thought better of it.

Macready and John Ryder.

WHEN Macready sailed for New York to fulfil his American engagements, John Ryder accompanied him as stage-manager, and also to play seconds to him in his varied *répertoire*. The hasty temper of the tragedian is a world-known fact. No one was more conscious of his fault than Macready himself, and no man could pray more zealously or more persistently to be cured of this unfortunate drawback to his otherwise kindly disposition. During the first rehearsal, Ryder managed somehow to incur the anger of the tragedian, who launched forth in his most savage style. Ryder preserved a strict silence under the heavy rebuke. When the rehearsal had come to an end, Ryder sent a request to the private room of Macready, asking for a few minutes' conversation with him. Ryder found his chief all smiles

and urbanity. Ryder lodged his complaint, that he should have been so seriously taken to task before the entire company, who could not be expected to render much obedience to one who had been so mercilessly castigated. 'Now,' said Ryder, 'unless you can promise solemnly and faithfully that under no circumstances shall any repetition take place, I shall at once return to England.' Ryder pointed to a vessel lying in the harbour, and continued, 'There is the *Little Western* with her steam up; she sails in an hour. That time is ample for me to pack and settle my hotel-bill. So unless you can give me the promise I require, never to rebuke me in the presence of the company again, I shall leave for England in yonder vessel.' Macready gave the promise required, and never once broke it.

Charles Kean and the Tom-Cats.

DURING the rehearsal of one of the Christmas pantomimes at the Princess's Theatre, when under the

reign of the late Charles Kean, a laughable incident occurred. In one scene a row of black tom-cats,

BARUCH, the scribe, did not get a penny a line for writing Jeremiah's second roll for him, I fancy; and St. Stephen did not get a bishop's pay for that long sermon of his to the Pharisees—nothing but stones.—**JOHN RUSKIN.**

manufactured of wood, were represented standing on the top of a garden-wall. At a certain point of the dialogue each cat was expected to elevate its tail to an angle of ninety degrees—that is, perpendicular. All appeared to go correctly, when suddenly a voice was heard from the dark recesses of the pit, in the unmis-

takably solemn and emphatic accents of Charles Kean. 'There is one black tom-cat with its tail not sticking up; take it away—take it away!' The plaintive and despairing tones of the last three words convulsed with laughter the company, who were not aware that the great little man had been a spectator of the rehearsal.

Madame Bernhardt at the Albert Hall.

MADAME BERNHARDT, when introduced by a Royal Personage to his brother-in-law at the great bazaar in the Albert Hall, did not catch the name of this last distinguished relative. Soon after, when re-

proaching the said generous Royalty for not letting her know whom she was meeting, she added naively, 'O, you said your brother-in-law! Well, a brother-in-law may be any person!'

Anecdote of Miss Neilson.

MISS ADELAIDE NEILSON used to tell the following amusing story of a *contretemps* which happened to her on the stage: 'I remember once playing in Dublin. It was Juliet. In the death-scene, when I seized the dagger and stabbed myself, a very excited Irishman in the pit, overcome with sympathy and terror, shrieked, "Och, Jim, she's done it!" I was so convulsed with laughter that I could only get up a giggle for the death-scene. And again: I was playing Pauline, in *The Lady of Lyons*, with a weak Claude. He had been sick, and

was not strong; so I told him, when I rushed to him, I would clasp my arms round him, and he must just give way a little. I flew to his embrace, and he gave way indeed, and down to the floor we both went together, entangled in my train. We gathered ourselves up as best we could, and I caught him again with fervour, and the audience tried to stifle their laughter, when Claude's next words brought down the house—"This is the heaviest blow of all!" Of course we had the laugh out then.'

An Awkward Dilemma.

MR. KNOX, in his interesting book, *Underground, or Life below the Surface*, gives the following amusing anecdote: 'A Frenchman, travelling by railway in England, was very anxious to change his shirt, in order to make a visit after the train had arrived

at its destination, without taking the trouble to go to an hotel. His guide-book indicated a tunnel on the road, and he asked the guard how long the train would be in the tunnel. The guard mistook his question, and supposing he asked how long before the train would

PRICELESS MANUSCRIPTS.—O mind of man, can the works on which thou wouldst found immortality below be annulled into smoke and tinder by an inch of candle in the hand of an old woman!—EDWARD BULWER LORD LYTTON.

reach the tunnel, answered briefly, "Half an hour." The carriage in which the Frenchman was travelling contained several ladies and gentlemen. The traveller got down his valise, unlocked it, and made everything ready for a change of apparel while they were in the tunnel. As soon as they entered it he pulled off his shirt, and pre-

pared to put on a clean one; but imagine his surprise on discovering that the train remained only three minutes in the tunnel instead of thirty! As they came out into open daylight he was standing in their midst in a condition quite unfit for a mixed company of ladies and gentlemen.'

Swiftiana.

A CHARACTERISTIC anecdote is related of Swift's lesson in economy, which he learned from Royalty. Alderman Faulkner, the Dean's printer and publisher, one day being detained late at the deanery in correcting some proof-sheets, Swift made the alderman stay to dinner. Amongst other vegetables, asparagus formed one of the dishes. The Dean helped his guest, who shortly again called upon his host to be helped a second time; when Swift, pointing to the alderman's plate, said, 'Sir, first finish what you have upon your plate.' 'What, sir, eat my stalks?' 'Ay, sir; King William always eats the stalks!' This story was told by Faulkner to Dr. Leland, who asked, 'And, George, what! were you blockhead enough to obey?' 'Yes, Doctor; and if you had dined with Dean Swift, *tête-à-tête*, you would have been obliged to eat your stalks.'

visited the Castle, and having waited for some time without seeing the Lord-Lieutenant, wrote upon one of the windows of the chamber of audience these lines:

'My very good lord, 'tis a very hard task
For a man to wait here who has nothing
to ask.'

Under which Carteret wrote the following happy reply:

'My very good dean, there are few who
come here
But have something to ask or something
to fear.'

—*—
Soon after Swift was made Dean of St. Patrick's he was sitting, one Sunday afternoon, at the house of Dr. Raymond (with whom he had dined) at Trim, near Dublin. The bell had rung, the parishioners had assembled for evening prayers, and Dr. Raymond was preparing to go to the church, which was scarce two hundred yards from his house. 'Raymond,' said the Dean, 'I'll lay you a crown I will begin prayers before you this afternoon.' 'I accept the wager,' replied Dr. Raymond; and immediately they ran as fast as they could towards the church. Raymond, who was much the nimbler man of the two, arrived first at the door, and when he entered the

—*—
Lord Carteret was distinguished by a readiness of wit with which he could retort and parry even the attacks of Swift. It is said that about the time when the proclamation was abroad against the Drapier's fourth letter, the Dean

THE PRURIENT PRUDE.—This is a lewd hypocrite, who passes over all that is sweet and pure and innocent in a book with genuine disrelish, and fixes greedily on whatever a foul mind can misinterpret or exaggerate into indecency. He makes arbitrary additions to the author's meaning, and so ekes out the indelicacy to suit his own true taste, which is for the indelicate. This done, he turns round upon the author whom he has defiled, and says, 'You are unclean.' And so the poor author is; but why? A lump of human dirt has been sitting on him and discolouring him.—CHARLES READE.

church walked directly towards the reading-desk. Swift never slackened his pace, but, running up the aisle, left Dr. Raymond behind him in the middle of it, and stepping into the reading-desk without putting on a surplice, or opening the Prayer-book, began the Liturgy in an audible voice, and continued to repeat the service sufficiently long to win the wager.

At an inn, seeing the cook scraping a piece of mutton, Swift asked how many maggots she had got in it. 'Not so many as are in your head,' answered the wench smartly. The Dean was angry, and complained to her mistress.

Alderman Brown having undergone Swift's raillery in silence for some time at dinner, suddenly looked up from his plate on observing Swift take apple-sauce to the wing of a duck, and exclaimed, 'Mr. Dean, you eat your duck like a goose.'

Pope relates: 'Dr. Swift has a blunt odd way that is mistaken by strangers for ill-nature. 'Tis so odd that there's no describing it but by facts. I'll tell you one that just comes into my head. One evening Gay and I went to see him; you know how intimately we were all acquainted. On our coming in, "Heyday, gentlemen," says the Doctor, "what's the meaning

of this visit? How came you to leave all the great lords that you are so fond of to come hither to see a poor dean?" "Because we had rather see you than any of them." "Ay, any one who did not know you as well as I do might believe you. But since you are come I must get some supper for you, I suppose?" "No, Doctor, we have supped already." "Supped already! that's impossible; why, 'tis not eight o'clock yet!" "Indeed, we have!" "That's very strange; but if you had not supped I must have got something for you. Let me see, what should I have had? a couple of lobsters, and that would have done very well; two shillings. Tarts a shilling. But you will drink a glass of wine with me, though you supped so much before your usual time to spare my pocket?" "No, we had rather talk with you than drink with you." "But if you had supped with me, as in all reason you ought to have done, you must have drunk with me. A bottle of wine, two shillings. Two and two are four, and one is five; just two-and-sixpence apiece. There, Pope, there's half-a-crown for you; and there's another for you, sir; for I won't save anything by you, I am determined." This was all said and done with his usual seriousness on such occasions; and, in spite of everything we could say to the contrary, he actually obliged me to take the money.'

THE interest in the Arts having gradually become much more of an enlightened interest, the public has been slowly trained to fix its attention upon the *intellect* which is presupposed in the Arts rather than upon the offices of *pleasure* to which they minister. The Fine Arts have now come to be regarded rather as powers that are to mould than as luxuries that are to embellish. And it has followed that artists are valued more by the elaborate agencies which they guide than by the fugitive sensations of wonder or sympathy which they evoke.—THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

The Dean asked Kenny, a Carmelite priest, 'Why the Catholic Church used pictures and images, when the Church of England did not?' 'Because,' answered the priest, 'we are old housekeepers, and you are new beginners.' Swift was so surprised and incensed that he left the room.

Dean Swift had dined one day in the country, and on going away the servant of the family brought his horse. As the man held the steed, the Dean called to his own man, and asked him whether it would not be proper to give something to the servant for his trouble. The man assented, and the Dean asked him what he thought would be proper to give the man, and whether half-a-crown was too much. 'No, sir.' 'Very well,' replied Swift, and gave the man the half-crown. When the board-wages of the week came to

be paid he stopped the half-crown, and read his servant a lecture, telling him it was his duty to attend on him, and not leave him to the care of others; that he brought him to the house that he might not give trouble to others; and pressed his argument by supposing he would not in future be quite so generous of his master's money.

Lord Orrery relates that Swift dined once at a Lord Mayor's feast in Dublin, and was attacked and teased by an opulent, boisterous, half-intoxicated squire, who happened to sit next to him. He bore the awkward raillery for some time, and then on a sudden called out to the Mayor, 'My lord, here is one of your bears at my shoulder; he has been worrying me this half-hour, and I desire you will order him to be taken off.'

Medical Anecdotes.

In some parts of Ireland it is customary to read out the names, at the Sunday service, of church members who have died during the week. There was a priest who had a grudge against a local practitioner. When, therefore, one of the poor man's patients died, the priest announced it as follows: 'Mr. A. is dead. The Lord have mercy on his soul. Dr. B. attended him.'

A young medical man, recently qualified, was in his hospital smoking-room the other day, to say good-bye to old friends before his departure for the West Indies. 'I rather think I shall witness a great many death-bed scenes where I am going,' he remarked, in the course of conversation. 'Why cert'nly,' admitted the too candid friend, 'if you get much practice.'

THE SECRET OF YOUTH.—The mind which retains to the last youth's quick susceptibility to disgrace and to glory retains to the last the power to resume the shape that it wore in youth. Cynicism is old at twenty. Impudence has no elasticity. If you care no more than the grasshopper for the favour of gods and the reverence of men, your heart has the age of Tithonus, though your cheeks have the bloom of Achilles. But if, even alone in your room or a desert, you

The following epigram on Dr. Radcliffe, the once-famous physician, wit, and conversationalist, and the munificent benefactor of Oxford University, is to be found in an old edition of Prior's poems, to which author it is ascribed :

'I sent for Radcliffe; was so ill
That other doctors gave me over.
He felt my pulse, prescribed his pill,
Said I was likely to recover.
But when the wit began to wheeze,
And wine had warmed the politician,
Cured yesterday of my disease,
I died last night of my physician.'

The same Dr. Radcliffe held the appointment of physician to the Princess Anne of Denmark, afterwards that Queen Anne of whose decease we are sometimes even now reminded, until he lost the position by his own grave misconduct. The circumstances of his quarrel with her Royal Highness were briefly as follows: The Princess, like many others of her charming sex at the present day, was much troubled with her 'nerves,' which became a constant annoyance to her physician, requiring his attendance at all and the most inconvenient of times. On one occasion Radcliffe was sitting over his bottle of wine at the Mitre Tavern in Fleet-street (celebrated physicians did such things in those days), when a messenger arrived requiring his immediate attendance

at St. James's. Having cracked his second bottle of port, the physician was in no hurry to depart and obey her Royal Highness's behest; and a second messenger having been sent after the first, Dr. Radcliffe, now gloriously drunk, replied, 'Tell (hic) Royal Highness (hic) sha'n't come. She's vapourish (hic). Ash well ash any womansh in world (hic), only she won't believe it (hic).' From that hour until the day of her death, Dr. Radcliffe was never sent for again, and then it was the great reputation in which he was held overpowering the Queen's dislike to him.

The following is said to be a brilliant example of German wit: *Child*: 'Herr Pastor, my mother sends me to say that my father died last night.' *Pastor*: 'Did you call a doctor?' *Child*: 'No, Herr Pastor; he died of himself.'

Rowland Hill was accustomed to ride a good deal, and by this means and other exercise preserved vigorous health. On one occasion, when asked by a medical friend what physician and apothecary he employed to be always so well, he replied, 'My physician has been a horse, and my apothecary an ass.'

Lady Clermont's Laced Tea.

THE Honourable Grantley Berkeley tells the following amusing story of old Lady Clermont, who used to be a constant guest at the

Brighton Pavilion in the days when that singular edifice was the abode of royalty and roysterers. Her physician had recommended

could still blush or turn pale at the thought of a stain on your honour—if your crest still could rise, your pulse quicken, at the flash of some noble thought or brave deed—then you have the heart of Achilles, though at the age of Tithonus. There is a certain august shamefacedness—the Romans call it PUDOR—which, under hairs white as snow, preserves the aspect of youth to all personations of honour, of valour, of genius.—EDWARD BULWER LORD LYTTON (*Caxtoniana*).

a moderate use of stimulants to supply that energy which was deficient in her system, and brandy had been suggested in a prescribed quantity to be mixed with her tea. 'I remember well,' says Grantley Berkeley, who was a child at the time, 'having my curiosity excited by this to me novel form of taking medicine, and holding on by the back of a chair to watch the *modus operandi*. Very much to my astonishment the patient held a liqueur-bottle over a cup of tea, and began to pour out its contents, with a peculiar purblind look, upon the back of a tea-spoon. Presently she seemed suddenly to become aware of what she was about,

turned up the spoon the right way, and carefully measured and added the quantity to which she had been restricted. The tea, so strongly "laced," she then drank with apparent gusto. What seemed inexplicable to my ingenuous mind was the unvarying recurrence of the same mistake of presenting the back of the spoon instead of the front. The gravity with which she noticed her apparent mistake, without attempting to conceal it, and her little exclamation of surprise, so invariably uttered, amused me so much that when she quitted the Pavilion the best part of the day's entertainment seemed to have departed with her.'

Providence and the Bellman.

TAMMAS TINKLER, the bellman of M——, was as 'drouthy' a character as ever reeled under the influence of 'guid Glenivet.' His guidwife Jean was almost as fond of a dram as himself, and never lost an opportunity of 'a bit taste,' as she harmlessly phrased it. Like Sairey Gamp of happy memory, she liked to see people 'drink fair,' and woe betide Tammas if ever he came home at night drunk and found her sober! But if she had had a drop herself, her husband was free to come in unmolested. As Tammas spent every evening of his life in a public-house, it may be guessed that he seldom returned to his ain fireside in a state of sobriety. When he came near his own door, which was always left wide open for him, he would stop

to listen for any sign of Jean's condition. If he heard nothing he would put forth a feeler, as he called it, and this feeler consisted in his taking his hat and throwing it in at the open door. If it remained inside he knew it was all right—that the guidwife had been having a dram herself; but if it were quickly thrown out he knew that she was sober, and if he ventured in he would have a bad quarter of an hour. Picking up his hat he would turn away until Jean had left the coast clear by going to bed. One very windy night a sudden gust deprived Tammas of his hat, and sent it spinning down a dark lane, where he failed to find it. 'Eh, sirs!' he muttered, 'what'll I dae the nicht to fin' oot if the auld wife's in a comfortable

CONVEY thy love to thy friend, as an arrow to the mark, to stick there; not as a ball against the wall, to rebound back to thee.—PHILIP QUARLES.

humour?' As he staggered homewards he came to the conclusion that he couldn't do better than use one of his boots for a 'feeler.' He sat down, and was unlacing it, when one of his cronies came to him with the lost hat. 'Eh, man Geordie!' he exclaimed joyfully, 'I thocht Providence an' mysel' were ower auld friens to alloo me be placed at the mercy o' that auld

jaud in there.' With these words he threw the hat into the house, where it did not remain more than a couple of seconds, but came whizzing out close to his ear. 'I telt ye sae, Geordie. Aye trust in Providence, an' ye'll ne'er get into scrapes.' Geordie picked up the hat, and the two turned away in search of a more comfortable shelter.

A Fashionable Dairymaid's Disaster.

AMONG the brilliant coterie of beauties that surrounded the Prince of Wales at Brighton in the early part of the present century was Lady Haggerstone, whose charms had at first sight attracted the admiration of the amorous Florizel. But not content with the general admiration which his Royal Highness was disposed to grant to all pretty women, her ladyship was ambitious to completely captivate the heart of the Heir-Apparent. Accordingly a *fête champêtre* was announced to come off at her pretty little villa near the Spa, and her ladyship was determined to charm the Prince by assuming a rustic dress that would have satisfied the taste of a Watteau. At her residence she had a miniature farmyard, and three pretty little Alderneys. When the Prince with his friends and attendants had arrived, the fair hostess came forward from a side wicket, dressed as a milkmaid, for the purpose of making a syllabub for the Prince. She had a silver pail in one hand and

an ornamental stool in the other. Thus equipped she tripped along, with ribbons flying from her dainty little milking-hat, that hung on one side of her graceful head, and the smallest little apron tied below her laced stomacher, till she came opposite his Royal Highness, to whom she dropped a carefully studied, bewitching rustic curtsy. Then passing lightly over the beautifully-plaited straw, her tucked-up gown showing her neat ankle as well as her coloured stockings, she placed her stool and pail conveniently for use. Leaning against the flank of one of the crossest-looking of the Alderneys, she was about to begin her pretty task; but, not relishing this new and strange companion, the animal at once commenced kicking out, upsetting stool, pail, and milkmaid, and then trotting coolly away. Lady Haggerstone rose, covered with confusion, and beat a hasty retreat into her little dairy, whence she did not emerge again that day.

A bad Look-out for Editors.

SOME recent statistics of the average duration of life in America show that editors rarely live to old age. The labours of their pen, or perhaps the six-shooters or bowie-

knives of irate contributors whose mss. have been rejected, send them out of the world at the early age of forty years.

H. L. C.

O WIND, if Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?
SHELLEY.

The Child is Father to the Man.

M. OSCAR COMETTANT, the well-known French *littérateur*, tells of a conversation he lately overheard at a children's *bal costumé* in Paris between a boy of fifteen and a girl of thirteen years of age, both faultlessly got up in fancy dress:

'It will delight me so much, mademoiselle, to dance the first quadrille with you,' said the young gentleman. 'I am engaged, monsieur.' 'That is indeed my misfortune. Perhaps I may be honoured with the second?' 'If you wish it, monsieur.' 'Thanks! How marvellously well this costume of yours becomes you!' 'Truly! you find it so?' 'Who would not, I wonder, agree on that point with me, mademoiselle? I believe that I have already had the pleasure of meeting you.' 'I fancy not, monsieur.' 'But you go into society, I presume?' 'Not yet. Mamma

thinks that I am somewhat too young. But you—do you go out much?' 'O no! My father chooses to send me early to bed.' 'Where, then, monsieur, do you think that you have seen me?' 'Passing in the streets. Ah, mademoiselle, there are some persons, once seen, never forgotten.' 'Indeed! O, here is my partner come to claim me!' 'Be it so—I can't help it—but I shall not dance this quadrille, since I cannot have the pleasure of dancing it with you.'

'What think you of this?' adds M. Comettant. 'Does it not seem that gallantry, like courage, is not fettered by age?' But better, we think, had he written, with Charles Dickens: 'It always grieves me to contemplate the initiation of children into the ways of life when they are scarcely more than infants.'

H. L. C.

The Child Critic.

Johann Heinrick von Dannecker, the German sculptor, worked for eight years upon his statue of Christ. At the end of two years he called a little girl into his studio, and, pointing to the figure, asked, 'Who is that?' The child replied, 'A great person.' The artist turned away disheartened. 'I have failed,' said he. 'I'll begin anew.' He did so; and, after

some years of patient labour, he once again brought the same little maiden before the statue. 'Who is it now?' he inquired. After a long silent gaze, she bowed her head in adoration, and, with tears in her eyes, answered, 'It is He who said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me."' Then Dannecker knew that his work was a success.

A Rothschild Story.

THE following is told of one of the Rothschilds—he of Frankfort: Came the Baron von G. into the office of the great banker. 'Take a chair, sir,' said he, not even raising his head from his writing. 'Sir!' said G.; 'why "sir"? I

am, like yourself, a baron of the Empire, and I think should be addressed as such.' 'A thousand pardons!' replied Rothschild; 'a baron of the Empire? then take two chairs until I can attend to you.'

THERE are but two classes of the wise: the men who serve God because they have found Him, and the men who seek Him because they have found Him not. All others may say, 'Is there not a lie in my right hand?'—CECIL.

A Cleopatra Story.

HERE is a curious anecdote of the finding of a picture of Cleopatra, compiled from a Philadelphia newspaper: In the year 1818 the Villa Adriana at Tivoli was sacked. In the rubbish piled together by the pillagers were found sixteen pieces of slate, the putting together of which disclosed a picture of Cleopatra painted in encaustic, and claimed by the lucky finder as the only perfect specimen of Greek art extant. Passing from hand to hand, often hidden, and in constant danger of being seized by some connoisseur among the Austrian invaders of Italy, it has at last found a home at Sorrento, where it may be found in the villa

of the Baron de Benneval, who has written a monograph proving it to be genuine Greek. The portrait is life-size, and so much in the style of Leonardo da Vinci that many critics have insisted that it comes from his brush. The fact, however, remains that the secret of the composition of the vehicle employed was lost long before Leonardo's day, Pliny the younger being the last who has described the method. Timomachus, a painter of Byzantium and a pupil of Apelles, is given credit as the artist, he having painted it, it is supposed, for the Emperor Augustus.

Three Clever Hits.

LINES TO O'KEEFE.

(Said to be written by Peter Pindar.)

They say, O'Keefe,
Thou art a thief,
That half thy works are stol'n or more;
I say, O'Keefe,
Thou art no thief,
Such stuff was never writ before!

EPIGRAM.

Three traitors—Oxford, Francis, Bean—
Have missed their wicked aim,
And may all shots against the Queen
In future do the same!
For why—I mean no turn of wit,
But seriously insist
That, if her Majesty were hit,
No one would be so missed.

THOMAS HOOD.

EPIGRAM.

The French have taste in all they do,
Which we are quite without;
For Nature, that to them gave *gout*,
To us gave only *gout*.

LORD BRISKINE.

NEVER hold any one by the button or the hand in order to be heard out ; for if people are unwilling to hear you, you had better hold your tongue than them.—CHESTERFIELD.

A Punning Welcome to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

THE *Guardian* publishes the following lines 'On Bishop Benson's Elevation' to the See of Canterbury. They are signed Charles Wordsworth, Bishop of St. Andrews :

As Abram's name to Abraham,
In earnest of undying fame,
Was changed by voice from Heaven,
So, raised to the Primatial Throne,
May Benson, turned to *Benison*,
Proclaim henceforth in richest boon
Blessing received and given.

A Political Conundrum.

WHY was the late affair in Egypt
like a game of Whist ?
Because Turkey shuffled—Arabi
cut—England led and played the
deuce—France played the knave
and wanted honours.

Variorum.

CAPTAIN B. of 'Ours' had a regimental reputation for malapropisms, but very frequently these fitted uncommonly well into his sayings. *Eccè signum* : A brother-officer, rather noted for his fondness for alcoholic liquors of all sorts, and whose face spoke of it, rejoined the corps from travelling on the Continent. Says B. : 'You've been in Italy ?' 'Yes.' 'Seen all the big places ?' 'A few of them.' 'Crossed the Pontac Marshes and crossed the Rubicund ?' We all roared ; but B. went away smiling, for his brother-officer's nose and cheeks were redder than ever.

Amongst 'the poems of America,' there are few more popular than 'Little Jim.' The authorship of this touching bit of verse, a fireside story that Edwin Waugh might have written, was recently made known. The poem first appeared in the *Boston Intelligencer* up-

wards of thirty years ago, having been sent to that paper by a young lady, in whose album it had been written by Mr. C. W. Couldock, an actor. In writing the poem in the album Mr. Couldock had added a footnote stating that the author was Ned Farmer, of Greet, near Birmingham, and by him presented to the writer.

One day speaking of authorship as a profession, Colman said, 'It is a very good walking-stick, but very bad crutches.'

Colman, himself no giant, delighted in quizzing persons of short stature. Liston and pretty little Mrs. Liston were dining with him, and towards evening, when preparing to leave their host, Liston said, 'Come, Mrs. L., let us be going.' 'Mrs. L. (Ell), indeed !' exclaimed Colman ; 'Mrs. Inch, you mean !'

IN every mind where there is a strong tendency to fear, there is a strong capacity to hate. Those who dwell in fear dwell next door to hate; and I think it is the cowardice of women which makes them such intense haters.—MRS. JAMESON.

Sheridan one day meeting two royal dukes walking up St. James's-street, the younger thus flip-pantly addressed him: 'I say, Sherry, we have just been discussing whether you are a greater fool or rogue; what is your own opinion, my boy?' Mr. Sheridan, having bowed and smiled at the compliment, took each of them by the arm, and instantly replied, 'Why, faith, I believe I am between both!'

When the Duke of York, during the Walcheren expedition, had to retreat before the French, Sheridan gave as a toast, 'The Duke of York and his brave *followers*.'

Sydney Smith, talking of the bad effects of late hours, said of a distinguished diner-out that it would be written on his tomb, 'He dined late.' 'And died early,' added Luttrell.

A miserly old person, remarkable for his reluctance to contribute to public institutions, was at length prevailed upon to attend a charity sermon in Westminster. After the sermon the plate was handed round the vestry. Fox and Sheridan were present. 'The doctor has absolutely given his pound,'

said Fox. 'Then,' said Sheridan, 'he must absolutely think he is going to die.' 'Poh!' replied Fox, 'even Judas threw away twice the money.' 'Yes,' said Sheridan, 'but how long was it before he hanged himself?'

Sheridan once handled, with considerable irony, Clifford, a lawyer, who had made some strong comments upon his (Sheridan's) political conduct, to which he replied: 'As to the lawyer who has honoured me with so much abuse, I do not know how to answer him, as I am no great proficient in the language or manners of St. Giles's. But one thing I can say of him, and it is in his favour: I hardly expect you will believe me, but I pledge my word to the fact that once, if not twice, but once most assuredly, I did meet him in the company of gentlemen.'

Sydney Smith once said of Dr. Whewell, 'Science is his *forte*, omniscience is his *foible*.' A good gibe; but many do not understand it, and to those who do not there is a retort. The two words, *forte* and *foible*, are the technical names for the strong and weak parts of a sword-blade; and it is certain that the *foible* of some weapons is stronger than the *forte* of others.

THEODORE HOOK ON THE HIGHER CIVILISATION.

IN our December number we gave specimens of Theodore Hook as an *improvisatore*. The following is one of his droll compositions in another vein :

It happened on the 31st of March 1926, that the then Duke and Duchess of Bedford were sitting in their good but old house, No. 17 Liberality-place (the corner of Riego-street), near to where old Hammersmith stood before the great improvements; and, although it was past two o'clock, the breakfast equipage still remained upon the table.

It may be necessary to state that the illustrious family in question, having embraced the Roman Catholic faith (which at that period was the established religion of the country), had been allowed to retain their titles and honourable distinctions, although Woburn Abbey had been long before restored to the Church, and was, at the time of which we treat, occupied by a worshipful community of holy friars. The Duke's family estates in Old London had been, of course, divided by the Equitable Convention amongst the numerous persons whose distressed situation gave them the strongest claims, and his Grace and his family had been for a long time receiving the compensation annuity allotted to his ancestors.

'Where is Lady Elizabeth?' said his Grace to the Duchess.

'She is making the beds, Duke,' replied her Grace.

'What, again to-day?' said his Grace. 'Where are Stubbs, Hogsflesh, and Figgins, the females whom, were it not contrary to law, I should call the housemaids?'

'They are gone,' said her Grace, 'on a sketching tour with the manciple, Mr. Nicholson, and his nephew.'

'Why are not these things removed?' said his Grace, eyeing the breakfast-table, upon which (the piece of furniture being of oak without covering) stood a huge jar of honey, several saucers of beetroot, a large pot of half-cold decoction of sassafrage, and an urn full of bean-juice—the use of cotton, sugar, tea, and coffee having been utterly abolished by law in the year 1888.

'I have rung several times,' said the Duchess, 'and sent Lady Maria up-stairs into the assistants' drawing-room to get some of them to remove the things; but they have kept her, I believe, to sing to them; I know they are very fond of hearing her, and often do so.'

His Grace, whose appetite seemed renewed by the sight of the still lingering viands which graced the board, seemed determined to make the best of a bad bargain, and sat down to commence an attack upon some potted seal and pickled fish from Baffin's Bay and Behring's Straits, which some of their friends, who had gone over there to pass the summer (as was the fashion of those times) in the East India steam-ships (which always touched there), had given them; and having consumed a pretty fair portion of the remnants, his favourite daughter, Lady Maria, made her appearance.

'Well, Maria,' said his Grace, 'where have you been all this time?'

'Mr. Curry,' said her ladyship, 'the young person who is good enough to look after our horses,

had a dispute with the lady who assists Mr. Biggs in dressing the dinner for us, whether it was necessary at chess to say check to the queen when the queen was in danger or not. I was unable to decide the question, and I assure you I got so terribly laughed at that I ran away as fast as I could.'

'Was Duggins in the assistants' drawing-room, my love?' said the Duke.

'No,' said Lady Maria.

'I wanted him to take a message for me,' said his Grace, in a sort of demi-soliloquy.

'I'm sure he cannot go, then,' said Lady Maria, 'because I know he is gone to the House of Parliament' (there was but one at that time); 'for he told the other gentleman who cleans the plate that he could not be back to attend at dinner, however consonant with his wishes, because he had promised to wait for the division.'

'Ah,' sighed the Duke, 'this comes of his having been elected for Westminster.'

At this moment Lord William Cobbett Russell made his appearance, extremely hot and evidently tired, having under his arm a largish parcel.

'What have you there, Willy?' said her Grace.

'My new breeches,' said his lordship. 'I have called upon the worthy citizen who made them over and over again, and never could get them—for of course I could not expect him to send them, and he is always either at the academy or the gymnasium; however, to-day I caught him just as he was in a hot debate with a gentleman who was cleaning his windows as to whether the solidity of a prism is equal to the product of its base by its altitude. I confess I was pleased to catch him at home; but unluckily the question was referred to me, and, not com-

prehending it, I was deucedly glad to get off, which I did as fast as I could, both parties calling after me, "There is a lord for you—look at my lord!" and hooting me in a manner which, however constitutional, I cannot help thinking deucedly disagreeable.'

At this period, what in former times was called a footman, named Dowbiggin, made his appearance, who entered the room, as the Duke hoped, to remove the breakfast-things; but it was, in fact, to ask Lady Maria to sketch-in a tree in a landscape which he was in the course of painting.

'Dowbiggin,' said his Grace in despair, 'I wish you would take away these breakfast-things.'

'Indeed!' said Dowbiggin, looking at the Duke with the most ineffable contempt; 'you do? That's capital. What right have you to ask me to do any such thing?'

'Why, Mr. Dowbiggin,' said the Duchess, who was a bit of a tartar in her way, 'his Grace pays you, and feeds you, and clothes you, to—'

'Well, Duchess,' said Dowbiggin, 'and what then? Let his Grace show me his superiority. I am ready to do anything for him; but please to recollect I asked him yesterday, when I *did* remove the coffee, to tell me what the Altaic chain is called, when, after having united all the rivers which supply the Jenisei, it stretches as far as the Baikal lake; and what did he answer? He made a French pun, and said, "*J'en sais pas*, Dowbiggin." Now, if it can be shown by any statute that I, who am perfectly competent to answer any question I propose, am first to be put off with a quibble by way of reply; and secondly, to be required to work for a man who does not know as much as I do myself, merely because he is a Duke, why, I'll do it; but if not, I will resist

in a constitutional manner such illiberal oppression and such ridiculous control, even though I am transported to Scotland for it. Now, Lady Maria, go on with the tree.'

'Willy,' said the Duke to his son, 'when you have put away your small-clothes, go and ask Mr. Martingale if he will be kind enough to let the horses be put to our carriage, since the Duchess and I wish to go to mass.'

'You need not send to Martingale,' said Dowbiggin; 'he is gone to the Society of Arts to hear a lecture on astronomy.'

'Then, Willy, go and endeavour to harness the horses yourself,' said the Duke to his son, who instantly obeyed.

'You had better mind about those horses, sir,' said Dowbiggin, still watching the progress of his tree; 'the two German philosophers and Father O'Flynn have been with them to-day, and there appears little doubt that the great system will spread, and that even these animals which we have been taught to despise will express their sentiments before long.'

'The sentiments of a coach-horse!' sighed the Duchess.

'Thanks, Lady Maria,' said Dowbiggin; 'now I'll go to work merrily; and, Duke, whenever you can fudge up an answer to my question about the Altaic chain, send one of the girls, and I'll take away the things.'

Dowbiggin disappeared, and the Duke, who was anxious to get the parlour cleared—for the house, except two rooms, was all appropriated to the assistants—resolved to inquire of his priest, when he was out, what the proper answer would be to Dowbiggin's question, which he had tried to evade by the offensive quibble, when Lord William Cobbett Russell reappeared as white as a sheet.

'My dear father,' cried his lordship, 'it's all over now. The philosophers have carried the thing too far; the chestnut mare swears she'll be d—d if she goes out to-day.'

'What!' said the Duke, 'has their liberality gone to this—do horses talk? My dear William, you and I know that asses have written before this; but for horses to speak!'

'Perhaps, Willy,' said the Duchess, 'it is merely yea and nay, or probably only the female horses who talk at all.'

'Yes, mother, yes,' said her son, 'both of them spoke; and not only that, but Nap, the dog you were once so fond of, called after me to say that we had no right to keep him tied up in that dismal yard, and that he would appeal to Parliament if we did not let him out.'

'My dear Duchess,' said the Duke, who was even more alarmed at the spread of intelligence than her Grace, 'there is but one thing for us to do—let us pack up all we can, and if we can get a few well-disposed post-horses, before they get too much enlightened, to take us towards the coast, let us be off.'

What happened further this historical fragment does not explain; but it is believed that the family escaped with their clothes and a few valuables, leaving their property in the possession of their assistants, who, by extending, with a liberal anxiety (natural in men who have become learned and great by similar means themselves), the benefits of enlightenment, in turn gave way to the superior claims of inferior animals, and were themselves compelled eventually to relinquish happiness, power, and tranquillity in favour of monkeys, horses, jackasses, dogs, and all manner of beasts.

A PHILOSOPHER.

LET all the mortals ever born
Recount their ev'ry grief;
Their tales I treat with utter scorn,
And hear with unbelief.
There never dwelt a soul on earth
To whom were so unkind
The Fates that ushered *me* to birth—
No matter. Never mind!

I madly loved in early life,
Before I left my teens;
The lady might have been my wife,
Instead of Mr. Green's.
'Twere sad enough the facts to tell
But worse remains behind:
I can't get on with Mrs. L.—
No matter. Never mind!

It struck me once I had a turn
For commerce or for trade;
I found a little safe concern
Where money might be made.
But rack and ruin came to pass,
And I could only find
One shilling in the pound, alas!—
No matter. Never mind!

I thought the City life so hard
That, in a little time,
Says I, I says, I'll be a bard,
And build the lofty rhyme.
Yet verse is not a merry task,
But one incessant grind;
Will genius ever pay? I ask—
No matter. Never mind!

I only steer a cranky craft
Across a stormy sea;
To slowly starve aboard a raft
Alone is left for me.
The waves are high, obscured the sky,
And bleakly blows the wind;
For help I loudly, vainly cry—
No matter. Never mind!

HENRY S. LEIGH.



LAWRENCE ALMA-TADEMA, R.A.
BORN AT DRONRYP, NETHERLANDS, 1836.







LONDON SOCIETY.

MARCH 1883.

'GOLDEN GIRLS.'

A Picture-Gallery.

BY ALAN MUIR, AUTHOR OF 'CHILDREN'S CHILDREN,' 'LADY BEAUTY ;
OR CHARMING TO HER LATEST DAY,' ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

'ONE OR TWO WORDS WITH YOU.'

I HAVE come to the conclusion that I ought, at this point, to let my readers know the plot of the story. There are novelists—and very great ones—who artfully keep their readers in suspense, about all sorts of matters, right on to the last chapter. Who administered the poison—who used the poniard—who forged the signature to the last will and testament—whether the heroine's father is the good man of high degree, with light hair and an amiable face, or the dark low-browed villain who has been prowling about the piece from the beginning—all these matters are left unsettled, keeping the student in most agreeable uncertainty. To this fine art I make no pretence. In fact, my theatre is not of sufficient size for spectacle and heavy melodrama. I am far more like the travelling performer, who spreads his bit of carpet in the street, drops on his back, shoots his heels into the air, and then, with the assistance of his little family, proceeds to entertain his patrons. Accordingly,

I tell all whom it may concern that this is a novel about marriage. The motive of this piece is to exhibit the singular results which may be obtained by judicious experimenters who plan marriages ten or fifteen years before the actual ceremony can take place. There you have the plot in a nutshell. Excepting, perhaps, a shipwreck and a trifle of bigamy, there will not be an event which might not have happened in a six-roomed house. There will not be a crime which would have cost the offender half-a-crown in any court in the kingdom. The whole affair will be quiet as a minuet. Accordingly, if any reader wants sensation I advise her to close this novel and wait for my next, when I mean to surprise the public generally. By the greatest luck I have managed to hit upon the character of a young woman who will go right through the Ten Commandments and the law of England, breaking everything, and at the end will—not die penitent, which is really getting worn out—but turn into a *respectable elderly female living on an annuity*. Together with this there will be a thrilling underplot, all

murders and marquises. I have also in my desk a secular extravaganza, the most fanciful and prettiest ever written; all the babies ride thoroughbreds and leap five-barred gates, and the middle-aged men use pap-boats and go-carts: and besides the original subject, the handling is so facetious that my publisher assures me I am safe for twenty editions. Till these performances appear, at which I am labouring night and day, I advise my sensational and romantic readers to seek their mental meat elsewhere. The present story is intended for that limited class, young gentlemen and ladies who want to get married themselves; and that other limited class, elderly gentlemen and ladies who want to get other people married; and, besides these, for that very limited class indeed who are spectators of life, and amuse themselves with their neighbours' follies. The story is, in fact, very like a game of chess. Here are Jerome Dawe, Daniel and Beatrice Ruddock, Martha Spring, Sally Badger, Major Sanctuary, and his brother the baronet; these are the players. Here are Violet and Mildred, Sholto and Eugene, Hector Badger and Bob Sanctuary junior, Lucy Ruddock and Victoria Sanctuary; these are the pieces. At the present moment, in the plot and anticipation of one or other of the players, each of these young people is to marry a particular person. Will he or she do it? Were the plotters wise enough or too wise? What if, at some juncture of the game, the pieces begin to dispose of themselves, skipping from square to square, while the players, perhaps, are laboriously pondering the next move? Out of such few and modest threads I am to weave my novel of *GOLDEN GIRLS*.

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. DANIEL RUDDOCK TRIES A BIT OF FLIRTATION, AND DELIVERS HIS SENTIMENTS ON FRIENDSHIP.

MR. JEROME DAWE was standing in his dining-room, his hat upon his head, his trusty stick Shakespeare in his hand, and a paper between his fingers, upon which were written certain commissions he had to execute; for it was Monday morning, and he was off to do his week's shopping. Martha Spring, flourishing a clothes-brush in her hand, hovered about him tenderly; and, as she saw opportunity, she made dabs at various portions of his person with such zeal that Jerome Dawe shifted backward a little each moment, and was making his way to the door by a series of retreating shuffles.

'Gently, Matty, gently,' he exclaimed, as that devoted female, spying a mark upon his left shoulder, pounced upon the place; 'that hurts.'

'Where will you get any one to take such care of you as your old Matty?' the warm-hearted creature observed, falling back a step or two, and taking in the general effect of his appearance. 'There! you look tidy now. Pity such a man should ever go about a sight. Lor,' said Martha, becoming reflective, 'to think of that figure being unmarried! Where's the women's taste?'

'Matty,' Jerome Dawe remarked, with impressiveness, 'the women's taste is not the only matter which goes to determine matrimonial connections. There may be men who don't choose to marry; or again'—Jerome was a widower himself, and his first wife had in her day played the mistress over Martha so sharply that her name was carved on that abigail's memory as on marble—

'there may be men who have tried once and have not succeeded, and are not going to try again.'

'And there may be men,' Matty rejoined, resting her clothes-brush upon the table, and, while she stood in this statuesque attitude, gazing at him like a parchment Venus, 'there may be men who will meet their fellow at last, and be happy in their old days, with some one to sympathise with 'em and to mend their stockings, and to tend 'em when they have a cold in the head, and so on. Do you believe now, sir, that matches are made in heaven?'

'Matty,' said Jerome Dawe gravely, 'that is a theological question. Ask me next Sunday, if you please.'

During the course of this improving dialogue there passed in front of the house Mr. Daniel Ruddock. He, glancing through the window, and seeing Jerome Dawe, did not (as we might have expected) hurry in to greet his dear friend. On the contrary, he walked rather hastily away, as if wishing to get out of eyeshot of his dear friend. Daniel generally managed to accomplish anything of the kind when he tried, and so it was now; for, as Jerome Dawe turned one corner of the road, Daniel peeped out from another corner, turning his head this way and that, like a rat looking out of his hole.

Two minutes after, Daniel was standing in Jerome Dawe's dining-room, where Martha Spring was now engaged brushing the crumbs from the cloth.

'Out, is he?' said Daniel Ruddock. 'Dear! dear! dear! What a pity I missed him! When will he be at home?'

'Four,' replied Matty tartly, being a little exasperated by a crumb which was out of her reach,

though she stretched across the table. 'There, I have got you for all that!' which triumphant utterance she addressed to the captured crumb.

Daniel Ruddock had taken his favourite place on the hearth-rug, and was regarding Martha with a crafty look. This look he exchanged all at once for a jocose expression.

'Matty,' he said, stepping forward, and poking her in the side, 'you are an uncommon fine woman!'

Perhaps Martha Spring had experience of Daniel Ruddock's ways; or perhaps her experience of mankind at large prepared her for this kind of compliment. She did not manifest any great alarm, although she coloured a little.

'Goodness gracious me!' she exclaimed; 'how many people say that to me one time or another!'

'No wonder, Matty,' said Daniel, advancing closer to her, while she showed symptoms of dodging him round the table, after the example of Daphne and other renowned ladies of the ancient world. 'Don't go away, Matty; I have something to say to you.'

'Get along with you, do!' Martha said, with maidenly coyness; and as Daniel came near she retreated, until, unluckily, his advance was arrested by an asthmatic fit, which forced him to throw himself into a chair, where he coughed until he was quite exhausted.

'Poor fellow!' Martha ejaculated, stopping in her retreat as perhaps Daphne would have done had Apollo pulled up in mid-chase. 'Pity you don't take more care of yourself—or have more care taken of you. *That's* the fault. You ought to have your black-currant tea, and your woollen

socks, and your comforters, and your what-nots; and many a wife would take care you had 'em too. But Lor, I don't know! Once they are married to a man they care no more for him than if he was a stock or a stone. There are women that would, though—' at which Martha sighed.

In justice to Mr. Daniel Rud-dock it must be said that he was as constant a husband as ever breathed, and, had he been the reverse, it could be by no means likely that he would cheat his wife of any endearments for the sake of bestowing them upon Martha Spring. Long ago, however, Daniel had been under-clerk to a pettifogging attorney; and, in the service of writs and other minor legal undertakings, he had learned that female vanity can be played upon with great effect, where ulterior ends have to be gained. But when he saw that Martha blushed and simpered he—being not a rash man—resolved to go no further in this direction. For all that, he meant to improve the complaisant mood he had awakened.

'Matty! Matty!' said Daniel, looking at her in a plaintive way, 'you have been shockingly used of late. I do really feel for you.'

What this meant Martha could not imagine, but, determined not to cast away the sentiment her circumstances had inspired, she shook her head, sighed again, and looked as if she knew all about it.

'After all your years of faithful service—after your devotion and integrity—to have the chance of making your fortune, and *then* to have it all pick-pocketed, if I may say so, and you left penniless! O, though I don't pretend to be what you call a feeling man, I feel this, Matty; I do indeed!'

Daniel gave a sympathetic sniff as he said this, and rubbed the corner of his eye.

Curiosity in Martha's breast got the better of policy, and she looked straight at him, and said,

'Whatever do you mean?'

'Mean, Matty?' he answered; 'do you know—of course you cannot know—that when those two wealthy children were first left in Mr. Dawe's keeping his intention was that you—you, Martha Spring—should have charge of them?'

'I never!' exclaimed Martha, holding up her hands.

Undaunted by her wonder and incredulity, Daniel proceeded to lay before her a whole scheme (purely imaginary, it need scarcely be said) which he declared was the original idea of Jerome Dawe. Jerome was to have moved to a larger house; a wing of this was to have been set apart for the children and their governess; Martha was to have been intrusted with the management of their domestic expenditure. Daniel easily convinced the woman, who listened with greedy ears, that in a few years she would have saved a large sum. 'Something to marry on,' he said, with a complimentary grin. Besides, Daniel went on to show, by ingratiating herself with the young heiress, Matty would probably secure for herself an annuity when Miss Walsingham came of age. All this was impudent invention, but Daniel knew what he was about. He warned Martha that he had only surmised all this; still, his surmises were certainties. Jerome Dawe had really formed the plan; only Martha must be prepared to hear her master deny the whole. She knew his way, did she not? Meanwhile, Daniel charged her not to drop the faintest hint that she had ever sus-

pected anything. And so, having fired her covetousness, and at the same time fenced her in with secrecy on all sides, when Daniel felt he had worked her on to the right point, he inquired abruptly, 'Who, think you, Matty, snatched this prize out of your hands?'

'How can I tell?' Matty replied.

'Mrs. Badger!' cried Daniel, with an involuntary eruption of hatred, which he thought not quite prudent, until he was relieved to see an equal look of enmity on Martha's face. 'Mrs. Sally Badger!'

'I cannot bear that woman,' he added. 'Mind, Matty, I am a man of the world. I am what people call a selfish man, Matty. I don't pretend to love you more than I love myself, Matty. I do not wish Mrs. Badger to get the influence over your master which she is trying for. That would be bad for me, and bad for you, Matty; worse for you than for me. You and I understand each other. What is your interest is my interest; what is my interest is your interest. Talk as you will about trust and honour, Matty, there is no foundation for mutual confidence like that. Now, Matty, if you are wise, and silent, and do as I wish, why, you will before long have a fortune of your own, as sure as my name is Daniel Rud-dock and your name Martha Spring.'

Here followed a long dialogue, full of point and business; but as the issue of the affair will sufficiently inform readers of its substance, and as we are tired of this disagreeable pair, we close the chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

IN WHICH SALLY BADGER SUCCEUMBS TO PROVIDENCE—SAMUEL BADGER RECALLS PROVIDENCE—MARGARET ALEXANDER TRUSTS IN PROVIDENCE—AND DANIEL RUDDOCK APPEALS TO PROVIDENCE.

SOMETIMES, when an express train is stopping at a station, we who pace the platform, waiting for the starting-bell, notice the careful driver with a long-necked oil-can, like a tin giraffe, letting subtle drops into the machinery here and there, which are to ease the movement when the train sets off again. To this prudent workman I now compare Daniel Rud-dock, who, for a time to come, we must fancy employed upon the machinery of his friendly little plot. Now a word, now a smile, now a shrug of the shoulders, bolder strokes at times—so Daniel busies himself, through it all contriving the defeat of Sally Badger and the capture of the Golden Girls.

Him we leave, and return to Sally Badger's modest little house. Great is the stir, mighty is the bustle, in which Mrs. Badger lives herself and makes her household live. A new house has been taken, of larger size and better appearance, and Sally is working, morning, noon, and night, at furniture and furnishing plans. What bits of carpet, nearly trampled out in the old house, can be cut or fitted to rooms and passages of the new; where fresh must be bought; whether the furniture of the present drawing-room will be good enough for the future parlour; how the drawing-room itself can be most cheaply arrayed in splendour: these are the problems Sally Badger revolves. Day and night wonderful Sally goes about with pencil and

paper ever in her pocket, and when she gets a new idea down it goes; and she has awful columns of figures on the paper, and the figures get dim with time and the friction of Sally's bunch of keys; and Sally at last confounds the subtraction and addition columns, and thinks all at once that she has fifteen pounds more to pay than she calculated. Down she sits suddenly on a box, and puts her hand to her brow and feels she had better give up the battle of life once for all.

'Sally, my dear one,' said Mr. Badger, who happened to be at hand on this appalling occasion, 'do not give way.'

'O Sammy, Sammy!' she cried, moved by the pathos of the occasion to confide in him, 'I have made a dreadful mistake. We want fifteen pounds more. O, what shall we do?'

'Now, my dear,' cried Samuel, almost vivaciously, for he saw her mistake, and his bosom was glowing to think that he, her humble husband, would for once correct and reinspirit her, 'you have added seven-ten, when you should have subtracted seven-ten. Look there. The total is sixty-five; just what you always said, my dear. You never are wrong—in the long-run. The total is just sixty-five.'

'So it is!' Sally exclaimed joyfully. 'O, what a relief! Sammy, after all I could not get on without you!'

Never, during their married life, had she paid her husband such a compliment. It quite lifted him up. He went down to the bank that morning with head so erect that his friends thought he had been having his boots new heeled; and when he heard a barrel organ playing 'See the Conquering Hero comes,' Samuel thought that inanimate things

were breaking forth in praise of him and his achievement.

Meanwhile, Mildred and Violet had taken quite a fancy to the Badger household and ways. At first Mildred had been inclined to regard the whole concern with disdain, a mood in which she was encouraged by her maid, who heartily despised the poverty of the people and the place. But gradually Mrs. Badger gained an influence over this singular child.

Mildred was haughty, unbending, and imperious, and both her own qualities and those of her new guardian seemed to prognosticate disputes and dislike. The event was just the reverse of such an expectation. Sally Badger's inflexible and outspoken character inspired even Mildred with awe, but in the awe there was a germ of liking. Mildred would listen with the utmost attention while Sally delivered her opinions or her commands. In every juncture of the little household life, the child waited until she saw what Mrs. Badger wished to be done, and she acquiesced in this with perfect confidence. Sally Badger, without at all judging the child's character, or grounding her opinions on any theoretical views, but moved only by the force of similitude, began to like Mildred heartily.

'That child never disobeys me,' she used to say with warm approval. 'In my sight or out of my sight, I can trust her wherever she goes.'

This was quite true. Sally's dogmatic character had so impressed Mildred that Sally herself was in her eyes the embodiment of rectitude and wisdom, and while more than ever apt to be wayward and haughty with others, she surrendered her will

wholly into the keeping of the potent Mrs. Badger.

It was immense fun for the children—especially for Mildred—to follow all the details of the furnishing of the new house. Mildred went to all the shops with Mrs. Badger, marked her choice of patterns, listened while she cheapened the goods, and actually once or twice managed to correct her in small mistakes of memory. Mrs. Badger received the correction not only with submission, but in a mood of gratification.

'I wish, Milly,' she cried, 'you had been my own child. Look at Hector over there!'

Master Badger was perched on the top of a roll of carpet, deep in a book, and his mother regarded him with despair, and talked to Mildred as if she were a woman grown.

'He never does anything else but read! I believe if the sky were to fall that boy would look up from his book for a minute and then turn over the leaf. O, that Providence had given me a practical son! But I foresaw all this even while he was a baby. You are quite right, dear, it *was* the brown carpet I chose for the little bedroom.'

And Sally beamed approval at Mildred, who felt the honour as much as if she had been a sheriff receiving knighthood.

Meanwhile, whenever it was possible, little Violet was allowed to share in the fun of the furnishing; only, as for the most part she was wheeled or carried, her movements were circumscribed. But she had plenty to say, and would find a similitude for every wall-paper and carpet, likening one to a field with daisies, and the other to a spreading tree. She had the funniest little comparisons for all she saw: a curiously-shaped coal

scuttle reminded her of a gondola, and the shovel was the gondolier. Peeling into tiny laughter at each conceit, and looking so frail, and so frolicsome, and so exquisitely lovely, she suggested the absolutely new idea of a merry angel. But often, in the very midst of a laugh, the little creature would stop and pant, and then put her white hand to her forehead with a weary sigh, looking older and wiser and sadder than a child should.

Poor Sally Badger, weighted by her indolent husband and her abstracted son, tugged and pushed at her furnishing with amazing energy. All day long she was fitting, measuring, planning; and far into the night she sat sewing carpets together, and working out the contrivances which she had devised during the day. She tried to make the meals comfortable, but scarcely ate a morsel herself; and in vain would Samuel Badger, looking up from his plate, beseech her to take 'some support for the system, Sally, my love.' She would be off to her stitching; and Samuel, seeing that she could not be persuaded, would settle himself comfortably down to the table and start afresh. Mildred, as soon as possible, would steal away and stand beside Mrs. Badger, marking every motion of her active fingers, and noting every expedient with which she faced the simultaneous difficulties of floor and carpet.

At last everything was ready, and Saturday night came. They were to move early on Monday morning, and Sholto and Eugene had 'come in to tea, and to have a game with the little girls. Sally, after a fatiguing day, set herself to muster up such preparations as she could for the evening meal, and, until the table was set and the children seated round it,

her feet never rested. Then she sat down.

'Now, Sally, my love,' Mr. Badger said, 'have a little bread-and-butter. Do you know,' addressing the company at large, 'there are few things more reviving than bread-and-butter—in a quiet way.'

Mrs. Badger sat resting her cheek upon her hand, but did not speak. There was a strange look in her eyes, and a deep flush upon her cheek; and after the meal had proceeded a little while in silence, she threw herself back in her chair, and her arms fell to her side—useless, it seemed, these untiring arms.

'Sammy,' she called out, 'my head feels so heavy. The room is going round. Sammy! I am falling off my chair.'

'Nothing of the kind, my dear,' replied Samuel reassuringly. 'It is only nervousness. If you would try a little bread-and-butter, and some nice hot tea, my dear, you would be better in a very short time.'

'Mrs. Badger is falling!' cried Sholto; and, leaping up actively, the little fellow was at her side, propping her up just as she fainted away. Luckily she had not slipped quite off the chair, and the sturdy lad held her up bravely.

All was confusion. Even the sluggish Samuel Badger grew alarmed and bustled about, and Mildred turned very pale, while Violet, in vague alarm, began to cry.

'I think, Hector,' Mr. Badger said at last, 'if this goes on very much longer you had better run for the doctor.'

'Let me, sir,' cried Sholto eagerly; 'I run faster than Hector.' And, scarcely waiting for authority, Sholto started off, while Mr. Badger, with the help of his son and little Eugene,

managed to move the now unconscious Sally to the sofa.

The doctor lived close at hand, and panting Sholto returned with him in a few minutes. Mrs. Badger had revived before he appeared, and was able to answer his questions. But as he made his examination a grave look passed over his face.

'She must be put to bed immediately,' he said, in a low voice, to Mr. Badger. 'This is a serious case. It is the old story; more spirit than strength.'

'Yes,' Samuel Badger replied, in one of his audible whispers; 'I quite understand. A medical gentleman once gave a similar opinion in my case. His remark was, "Badger, you are not only a sword, and you are as a sword far too keen for your scabbard." He was by no means sanguine of my recovery, entirely on that account—keenness; however, by the interposition of Providence, I rallied.'

'Let Mrs. Badger be put to bed at once,' the doctor said rather tartly. 'I shall look in again in two hours' time.'

It was curious to see Mildred, with fear in her face, standing at Mrs. Badger's side, and not heeding the solicitations of her maid that she would come up to her own room. In these exhortations little Eugene joined with great politeness.

'You know, Mildred,' he said, 'it cannot be good for you to be watching anybody who is so very ill.'

'I don't see what you have got to do with it,' Mildred replied, extinguishing him with one of her fixed looks.

'Look here,' said Sholto, thrusting himself before Mildred in his blunt way, 'Eugene and I must be off. Where is Violet? I must say good-night to Violet;' and he ran into the passage, where, find-

ing the timid creature in silent tears, 'O, don't cry, Violet,' said he, taking her hand; 'you know people are often ill this way, and they always get well next morning.'

'Good-bye, Mildred,' Eugene said, for she had followed them into the hall.

She did not answer, and the two were starting off, when Mildred called out,

'Sholto! you never said good-bye to me.'

'I never did!' he answered. 'I always *do* forget you, Milly. Good-bye. Mind you tell Violet not to cry.'

The two boys raced homeward, breaking from each other when they came to the cross-road.

'Mamma! mamma!' Sholto cried, dashing into the house, 'cousin Sally is very ill. She fell off her chair at tea—nearly off, I mean; and the doctor came, and he says it is very serious.'

Worthy Margaret Alexander went straight to her room and put on her bonnet and shawl.

'We must hope that, by the mercy of Providence, she will be spared,' the good woman said, and she offered up a prayer for her cousin as she made ready. She knew how great a catastrophe Sally's illness at such a time would be; and the good-natured Sholto, alarmed afresh by his mother's alarm, returned with her to the disturbed house of the Badgers.

Almost at the same moment, Eugene walked daintily into the room where his father and mother were sitting.

'Mamma,' he said, in his polite way, but with conscious importance, 'I have news for you. Mrs. Badger is ill—very ill indeed, the doctor says!'

The boy guessed that this piece of intelligence would interest his father and mother, and, in reply

to their questions, he gave them a full account of what had happened.

'Sad for poor Sally,' Daniel remarked, rather late in the conversation, however.

'Why did she work so hard?' Beatrice said harshly. It seemed she cared less for appearances than he did.

'Papa,' Eugene asked, 'if Mrs. Badger got very ill, or if she died, then, I suppose, Mildred and Violet would be taken away, would they not?'

Daniel looked at his son, then at his wife; at the boy with admiration, and at the mother with symptoms of an impending wink.

'There is half-a-crown for you, Eugene,' he said, having rummaged for the coin in his pocket. 'Go and play your fiddle. Aha, Bee!' said he to his wife; as the door closed upon the hope of their house, 'that is a clever lad. He sees consequences, does Eugene. Sally! Sally! you are not so powerful as you fancy. Things are not to be all your own way. Do you know, Bee, I feel better to-night than I have done for six months. Soho, Mrs. Sally! I rather think we shall find means to fit you out, strong as you think yourself. What do you say, Bee, to a stroll over to see Jerome? We might feel our way a little further after this bit of news. 'Soho, Mrs. Sally,'—he could not resist the temptation of addressing her in this visionary fashion—'you baited your hook. Very good. Your fish nibbled. Very good again. You landed your fish safe and sound, didn't you? Very, *very* good! But who carried the fish home, Mrs. Sally? Who cooked it? Who eat it? O Sally, Sally,' cried Daniel, falling into a moral vein, 'have you

never heard of Providence? Have you never heard that man proposes, but God disposes?

CHAPTER XVI.

IN WHICH DANIEL RUDDOCK FALLS
DOWN AND BREAKS HIS CROWN;
AND MARTHA SPRING HAS A
TUMBLE AFTER.

WHILE our two little Golden Girls lay sleeping that night, twined in each other's arms, as their habit was, wily Daniel Ruddock began to spin a web around them. They might have been two gay little flies, with bright bodies and gauzy wings, creatures framed for sunlight and calm, and he a greedy ugly spider making the snare ready for them, although—as is the spider's way—he seemed wholly intent on lawful business. One wonders what the spider thinks of himself. Does he ever reflect, 'I am a blood-thirsty wretch, living on weakness and innocence?' Or does his self-knowledge express itself in this form, 'I am a highly respectable and laborious member of society, and integrity, ingenuity, and industry have made my fortune?' Think the spider what he may, Daniel Ruddock never once suspected that he was a mean scoundrel. His view of human life made it a game of skill, where one player has to hold his own against all the world. Having regard to these tremendous odds, Daniel Ruddock held that, in certain junctures of the game, you must lie to the powerful, cheat the wise, and bully the feeble; and in this he no more thought himself a wrongdoer, than a soldier considers himself a murderer when he sees the enemy drop to the crack of his rifle. Daniel judged that he was rather a good man

on the whole. The fault lay in the game, not in the player.

Accordingly, he and Beatrice strolled over to Jerome Dawe, and the harmonious pair executed a kind of duet of flattery, extolling the mind, the face, the character, the habits of their dear friend; always managing in the old way to be tell-tales upon each other; Daniel letting Jerome know something which Beatrice had said the night but one before, Beatrice protesting against the breach of confidence; then Beatrice, in laughing revenge upon her husband, declaring that *she* would repeat one of *his* sayings, which *she* did, in spite of all his expostulation. Each of these disclosures went to show that Daniel and Beatrice believed, in their inmost souls, that such a man as Jerome Dawe never had lived before, and never would live again. Meanwhile, Jerome Dawe, inhaling this delightful incense, became, to drop into a modern comparison, very like a man who is judiciously treated with laughing-gas. His spirits rose immensely. He laughed aloud. He slapped his knees until his palms tingled with the stroke. Altogether, he believed himself to be a pillar of manhood, and that these two people were forced, by the supremacy of his character, to gaze up at him as they did.

It was a picture. The tall imposing elderly gentleman, with twinkling eyes, incessant smiles, and face turning about with delighted rapidity from flatterer to flatterer. The handsome woman, with speech as soft as oil, and not a solitary defaulting feature to show that she was playing a part; well-dressed, easy in her posture, one white soft hand caressing the hand of Jerome, so naturally that you might have sworn she was doing it unconsciously: Daniel

himself, crabbed, croaking, with serpentine subtlety in every line of his hard face, fawning, joking, and sniggering until, at the wittiest points, the tops of his shoulders touched the tips of his ears.

Daniel at last rose to go. His wife looked at him as if he had forgotten something; but as he did not regard her she wisely concluded that, for some good reason of his own, he had postponed the business of the night. Jerome was reluctant to part with them, but Daniel said they must go.

'In fact,' he said, 'we only strolled out for a mouthful of air, as I had been in the house all day.'

'And for something more,' his wife added. 'Because you were tired of work, and tired of me, and you said, "Let me hear one or two of Jerome's good stories."''

'Tired of you, eh?' cried Jerome, enraptured afresh. 'And wanted to hear one of my good stories? Well, perhaps I do know a good story or two!'

'It's your memory, you see,' Daniel said, shaking his head in hopeless envy of that prodigious faculty. 'Good-night, Jerome.'

Daniel was half-way down-stairs, and Beatrice, wondering still at his policy, had said her own good-night, when Daniel came up again.

'By the way, I quite forgot, poor Sally is very ill.'

'Sally!' exclaimed Jerome. 'Why, she was here this morning.'

'She won't be here to-morrow morning,' replied Daniel, with a curious blunt air; 'and she won't be here the morning after that. The doctor gives a bad account of her. I have seen it coming on for a long time. That woman will die, Jerome! Good-night, again.'

Simple-minded Daniel began to

descend the stairs again; Sally Badger's illness being obviously no farther concern of his, except on grounds of philanthropy and relationship—Sally being a human being, a friend, and a family connection.

'Stop! Daniel, stop!' Jerome Dawe called out, in great excitement. 'Don't go away in such a hurry. If Sally is taken ill it will be a serious matter for me. I must talk this over. I must have your advice.'

'He must have *my* advice!' cried Daniel, from a dark depth of the stair. He laid emphasis on the pronouns in jocose comparison of his own mental feebleness with Jerome's immeasurable strength. 'My advice! That is a good one! He, he, he! I ought not to laugh, though, and poor Sally in such danger.'

Whether at this point Fate inserted a twitch of conscience or a false step is uncertain, but the event is simple matter of history. Daniel missed his footing; and he performed the remainder of the down-stairs journey with amazing rapidity, being instantaneously heard in collision with various portions of the wood and masonry; and finally he produced sounds, as if he were sliding across the floor-cloth; and he wound up with a bump, as if he had been skating.

Through accident, or from habits of stinginess, the hall lamp had not been lighted; and now silence and darkness reigned for a moment. Then a door was hastily thrown open below, and Martha Spring, with a candle in her hand, rushed upon the scene. It appeared, from her movements, that this learned lady believed the noise to have come from overhead, for she held her candle aloft, and looked at the ceiling. This being so, and her

progress being rapid, she came upon the prostrate body of Daniel before he had time even to groan. Daniel, moved by fear of being trampled to death, seized her by the leg, which was descending upon his chest like a steam hammer. The consequence of this purely self-defensive movement was that Martha swung with fearful velocity downwards; the candlestick departed into the air, where it performed a series of evolutions, and finally announced the return of darkness with a crash, as it fell upon the floor; simultaneously the falling head of Martha cracked against the fallen head of Daniel, with a noise as if two wooden basins had met in mid-air, and with such realistic and persistent optical effects upon the patients that neither of them had the least suspicion that the candle had gone out.

The reign of silence was then renewed, like that of darkness, until Beatrice, flying into the drawing-room, came back with a light. A most sorrowful picture was now revealed. Daniel Ruddock, whose reason appeared to have taken an everlasting flight, was still grasping Martha by the ankle, while she, on her part, struggled fearfully, being well assured that she was in the hands of a burglar, and that it was a question of life and death. Even when the dim candle-light enabled her to recognise Daniel, her conduct was still governed by the conviction that he had deliberately planned an act of violence; and between Daniel's anguish and Matty's indignation, and the confusion of their joint faculties, there is little doubt that in a few seconds the two would have been cuffing and scratching each other, had not Jerome Dawe by this time descended to the scene. Like all blockheads, Jerome Dawe enjoyed

the minor misfortunes of his friends, and indeed he was not greatly to blame for bursting into a loud laugh at the spectacle which lay at his feet. He touched Martha with his foot in a facetious way.

'Well done, Matty, I declare!' he said. 'Daniel, my boy, you tripped her up cleverly. You never went down-stairs faster than that in your life!'

Daniel rose, not particularly soothed by observing that even his wife smiled at his woful appearance. Matty, whose temper was acrimonious, got upon her feet with difficulty, and eyed about her, as if looking for some one with whom she might safely engage in battle. But Daniel and Matty, like many incensed persons of greater figure, were forced to smother their rage in their own breasts; and at last, by exquisite efforts, each managed to squeeze out a smile.

This deplorable accident need not have been described, only that it passed into the action of this history. The four stood in the passage, Jerome Dawe, Daniel and Beatrice Ruddock, and Martha Spring, the latter being allowed to remain as some compensation for the indignities she had suffered. The talk soon turned on the illness of Sally Badger, and the probable consequences of that catastrophe. Hereupon Daniel Ruddock became civil to Martha Spring, and with an appearance of accident, which, as a feat of representation, cannot be too highly praised, he gradually opened out, before Jerome and Martha, a well-articulated scheme for the defeat of Sally Badger and the capture of the Golden Girls. This scheme Daniel represented as coming into his head, bit by bit, while they talked; in reality it had been long and

well prepared. Jerome listened with his air of pompous profundity. Matty devoured the whole greedily, and grinned in silent recognition of the speaker's cleverness. Daniel hooped his shoulders, and crossed finger upon finger, and croaked as if he were a human raven; Beatrice stood by, bland, handsome, dangerous. A quartet, reader, a quartet!

And still in each other's innocent arms, unconscious and peaceful, the little Golden Girls lay sleeping.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN WHICH SIMPLE SAMUEL MEETS A DANIEL WHO LETS HIM TASTE HIS WARE.

SALLY BADGER was very ill. Her labours, her anxiety, and the poverty which aggravated all she went through, had so lowered her system that she sank into a fever, from which her doctor prognosticated the worst. She lay half unconscious; but whenever she roused out of stupor her talk was business, the children, the new house, the furniture, and how soon she must get about again! Only once or twice she added gloomily,

'That is, if I ever get about again at all.'

How unprotected are poor people from misfortunes of every kind! The same penury which had sloped poor Sally's way down to this fever, had also left her affairs dangerously open to the sinister plots of Daniel Ruddock. Poor Sally had not ten pounds of ready cash in the whole world. To furnish her new house she had been under the necessity of drawing heavily upon Jerome Dawe; that is, she had asked him to advance certain portions of the allowance which he proposed to

make for the maintenance of the Golden Girls. This advance he had promised, but the money was not yet paid, and, in fact, the furniture had been bought, and the new house had been taken, partly in the great name of Jerome Dawe. Sally's payments were often behind, and she would have found it hard to get anything like large credit in Middleborough. Thus it came to pass that the house and the furniture were in a manner under the control of Jerome Dawe; and Daniel Ruddock, who well knew this, saw here an avenue to the accomplishment of his great design.

First of all Daniel shuffled off to Samuel Badger, and, with a face of the utmost concern, made inquiries about Sally, winding up this way,

'As the new house is ready, Samuel, and as quiet is so essential for Sally, do you not think that the children—Mildred and Violet, I mean—ought to be moved in? Mrs. Spring will take charge of them till Sally is well again.'

'Upon my word,' Samuel Badger exclaimed, 'that is the cleverest suggestion I have ever heard. It shall be done. Sally will be so much obliged to you. I will go and tell Sally at once.'

'Stay a moment,' cried Daniel, catching the tail of his coat in great trepidation. 'If I were you I should not mention it to Sally. Sick people worry so. Do not give Sally the least idea of what you are doing.'

'Upon my word,' exclaimed simple Samuel again, 'this is a cleverer suggestion than the other. I shall not let Sally know the children have gone out of the house.'

So that very afternoon the Golden Girls were conveyed to the new house, which was glowing with fires, and looking very com-

fortable; and Martha Spring stood in the doorway, already in her own fancy the mistress of that proud abode. As Mildred entered, the engaging virgin caught her, and administered a hug which she thought would be agreeable to the child.

'Let me go!' cried Mildred furiously; and extricating herself, she stamped in the hall with passion. 'How dare you touch me, you horrid old woman! Are you another servant?'

Martha released the little girl, greatly amazed and incensed at her boldness. Inly she vowed that when her authority had been fully established she would pay this impudent miss handsomely for her insulting behaviour. At present miss seemed to have the best of it, for, wheeling imperiously round as Violet came up in her maid's arms, Mildred called out,

'Little, see that woman does not touch Miss Violet!'

And this fairy empress walked into the dining-room, the door of which lay open, while Martha Spring stood in the passage, clenching her fists as if she were a prize-fighter.

At that moment Daniel Ruddock was seen coming up the gravel walk, and immediately Martha flew to meet him, and the excellent couple became absorbed in conversation.

'See how advantageous your position is, Martha,' said Daniel. 'It is not every woman I would have done this for. Nor any woman except yourself, Mat. And why you? Because I love you, Matty? Because I love you better than myself, eh, Matty? Not a bit of it!' cried Daniel frankly. 'I do it because I want your help, and you want mine. And we can each trust each other, because we each want each other. O Matty, that is

the foundation for true friendship, believe me. And what would life be without friendship? A wilderness, Matty, a howling wilderness! See what a position yours is. You have not even to give up Mr. Dawe's situation. Only two minutes' walk between the two houses! You can do your housekeeping over there; then on with your bonnet and shawl, or in damp weather take your umbrella, and here you are for the arrangements in the morning. The walking will do you good, Matty—the little bit of walking. Walking is so good for the wholesomes. It will add years to your life. And you will have these children for ten years, or more if you play your cards well, and then, whatever happens, Matty, you will be a rich woman; and riches, Matty, riches, what is life without riches? Another wilderness, Matty, howling louder than the first one.'

'That eldest girl is a little viper,' said Matty vindictively. 'If it was only safe, I would—'

'It will be safe soon, Mat,' Daniel replied, with a soothing and hopeful air. 'Perfectly safe. Only not just yet. You may do many a thing when you are in the saddle which could not be done when you have only got your foot in the stirrup, and many a kick that would knock you off before you get on—you know what I mean—when you are well mounted only makes the gallop pleasanter.'

'Very well; I'll wait,' Matty remarked grimly, 'till I'm in the saddle.'

'Do so, Matty. Now mind, you must keep Mr. Dawe up to it. The business part—the house letting, the furniture—I shall manage. It must be your part to see that Mrs. Badger never sets foot on that brass,' Daniel pointed

to the threshold. 'Remember, once she sets her foot on that brass you will be dished, and I will be dished, in fact everybody will be dished. I am now speaking on the supposition that Mrs. Badger recovers; if it should please Providence *not* to bless the means used for her restoration'—Daniel looked serious here—'why then, Matty, all our anxiety will be over.'

'I am not afraid of Mrs. Badger,' said Martha defiantly. 'Sally Badger!' she gave an insolent laugh, 'I shall be one too many for her, I promise you.'

'Well, if you are going to be one too many for Mrs. Badger,' retorted Daniel, with a serious air, 'you must be at least thirteen to begin with, for she would match any dozen women I ever met.'

'Leave Sally Badger to me,' replied Matty. She found an insolent pleasure in this freedom with the name.

'You may talk to her out of the window,' said Daniel, rather uneasy, it seemed, at his confederate's self-confidence. 'But once you open the door to her—However, Matty,' he added, breaking off with a new thought, 'one thing is certain—she can't come here for long enough yet.'

'What does my master say to all this?' asked Martha, changing the conversation. 'Is he agreeable?'

'Partly he is,' replied Daniel, 'altogether he will be. We have to manage that; you and me, Mat. And I have asked him to look in and meet me here this afternoon, about this hour. Why, Mat, as sure as I live, there comes his hat! Now mind, Matty, we must persuade Mr. Dawe. You know what I mean. We must manage him. We understand each other, and we are useful to each other, are we not, Matty—you and me?'

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN WHICH JEROME DAWE, DANIEL RUDDOCK, AND MARTHA SPRING ROAR WITH LAUGHTER.

HAD there been any spectators of classical education to consider Mr. Jerome Dawe as he walked with stately step up the garden, these, marking his awful visage, his magnificent head, his world-subduing stride, and the roll of his commanding voice, might have pronounced him a good modern image of the thundering Jove of heathen times. And if—as is perfectly possible—the thundering Jove of heathen times was little better than a pompous impostor, whose grand display of parts was a sham and a deceit played off on mankind, the instructed spectator would have judged the image absolutely perfect. In fact, when Mr. Jerome Dawe rested Shakespeare in the gravel, and inclined the weight of his body thereon, and gazed round him with an air of majestic contemplation, he might have been Olympian Jove modernised, in stockings and breeches and a frilled shirt, with a trace of snuff on the front of his waistcoat to complete the illusion.

'Daniel, my boy,' said the Olympian Jove, with a movement as if he meant to recover his perpendicular, and, having done so, poke Daniel in the ribs with Shakespeare, 'this is a pretty sort of place. Sally has lighted on her feet.'

'Sally! Ha! ha! ha!' cried Daniel, suddenly struck with a droll fancy, and making abrupt movements of his body as he laughed, until, between his action and the sound he sent forth, he produced the general effect of a sawyer going through a knotty plank. 'Sally! Yes; I see. Ha! ha! ha!'

'Daniel,' said Jerome Dawe solemnly, 'I hope your reason is not affected.'

'Ha! ha! ha!' cried Daniel again. 'He hopes *my* reason is not affected! *His* ain't, that's cock-sure.'

'Matty,' said Jerome Dawe, turning to his housekeeper with some concern, 'can you explain this?'

He pointed Shakespeare at Daniel Ruddock as if he were a lecturer and Daniel a subject.

'Explain it?' replied Martha Spring, tittering; 'not I. How should I know the goings on you two have between yourselves?'

Martha Spring burst out laughing after this playful rejoinder; and Jerome himself, looking grave and full of wonder for a moment, as well he might, suffered his features to relax, and at last broke into a knowing smile.

'You call me a clever fellow at a joke, Daniel?' he said. 'A downright clever fellow at a joke, eh?'

Jerome Dawe put this question not because he had the faintest idea what the joke was, but because he was unwilling to lose praise from any source. 'Honestly now, a real laughable joke, eh, Dan?'

Daniel began laughing himself, and Martha joined in, and finally Jerome Dawe himself brought up the rear with a tremendous peal of self-approving mirth. The three stood thus, laughing one against the other like buffo singers. Jerome Dawe felt that the louder and longer the laughter, the greater the testimony to his power as a mirth producer; so he resolved to encourage the others, and went on laughing, peal after peal, and Daniel Ruddock was forced to follow on until he could laugh no more.

This prologue having been

finished and gravity resumed, Daniel proceeded, with infinite audacity, to tell Jerome that he had perceived—and that Martha, who still stood with them, had also perceived—that the two girls were to be removed from the charge of Sally Badger, and handed over to Mrs. Spring. That a more suitable arrangement the wit of man could not have devised: That this house and its furniture were, to all intents and purposes, the property of Jerome Dawe. That Sally was too poor to be able to object practically to the arrangement. That in any case her recovery was uncertain. That Martha would still be able to retain her post as housekeeper in the establishment of Jerome himself. That the girls would be truly happy under the regulation of that excellent creature, Martha—he would say it twice before her face—that excellent creature, Martha! That a better woman, a more refined being, a more motherly individual, a more entertaining and naturally genteel person than Martha Spring did not walk upon this earth. That it was to Daniel a great effort to say all this in her presence. But that where duty called Daniel, Daniel always answered duty. Finally, that the whole of this arrangement, which, for sagacity, far surpassed ordinary human skill, was devised by Jerome Dawe himself, alone and unaided; a man who could plan his secret, and then step calmly into affairs, and execute his designs without any apparent effort.

From first to last, this mendacious address was delivered with the most staggering effrontery, and Martha Spring acted as chorus, coming in at the end of every paragraph with a fervent expression of assent. Only, when

Daniel spoke of her own virtues, the accomplished lady blushed with honourable shame; and when he began a second paragraph of panegyric, she yielded to the promptings of her natural vivacity, and said to Daniel Ruddock, 'Go along, do!' an address which she enforced by a lady-like dig in the ribs, which dig being delivered in a moment of exalted feeling, and being, by the finger of Fate, directed to a sensitive part, made Daniel sore for a week. However, with this exception, the entire performance was got through with great success, and Jerome Dawe was half convinced that he had really made this fine arrangement in the secrecy of his own capacious head!

'Come in, then,' cried he. 'Come into the house. Let us see how the children are getting on.'

CHAPTER XIX.

IN WHICH A YOUNG CHILD AND A SICK WOMAN ARE MORE THAN A MATCH FOR TWO KNAVES AND A FOOL.

INTO the house they came. And turning into the dining-room, they found Mildred with her maid, and little Violet lying fatigued on a sofa. Mildred was engaged in an argument with the woman.

'When is Mrs. Badger coming here?' she asked, in a passionate voice. 'Little! you must tell me.'

'Mrs. Badger is very ill, miss,' Little replied. She here gave a knowing look at Martha Spring, for the two were already friends, and Little knew there was something in the wind. 'I know nothing much about Mrs. Badger

—and I care less, miss,' she added, with a curious desire to be impudent towards Mrs. Badger and humble to her young mistress in the same breath.

Mr. Jerome Dawe entered the room at this moment, and Mildred marched up to him, with erect step and clear resolute eyes. She spoke, however, with respect, for not only did she know that Jerome Dawe was her guardian, but there was in his manner something which the high-bred child recognised as of a higher note than the behaviour of the rest.

'I want to know, if you please,' she said, 'when Mrs. Badger is coming to this house?'

'Really, child,' replied Jerome Dawe, 'that is what nobody can say. She is so very ill, you see.'

'Does Mrs. Badger know that Violet and I have come to this house?' the child asked, with remarkable energy and sharpness.

Two replies came in the same breath.

'Of course she knows all about it.'

So said Daniel Ruddock.

'Mrs. Badger does *not* know you have come to this house.'

So said Jerome Dawe.

This coincidence of truth and falsehood was a little embarrassing, especially to Daniel Ruddock; but as, by education and habit, he was thoroughly used to lying, and not altogether unaccustomed to being found out, he managed to add, with tolerable composure,

'I meant to say Mrs. Badger does *not* know.'

Mildred stood in the centre of the room with her tall slender frame, and fearless face, a splendid specimen of a little patrician; and Violet, with her wondering eyes set on her sister, made a most striking contrast. Round the two children all these deceitful plotting people were grouped, and not

one of them ashamed at what they felt or saw.

'I think,' Mildred said, looking at Jerome Dawe, 'if you please, we will go back to Mrs. Badger's house.'

Now, it was not in Jerome's nature to make decisive replies; and in answer to this he only said,

'Well, Mildred—we shall see—we shall see what can be done.'

This evasive answer led to a complication. For Daniel Ruddock began to fear that the whole plot might fail, and resolved by bolder strokes to make an end of opposition.

'You have got to stay in this house, little missy!' he said. 'Mrs. Badger is nobody here, and you must do what you are bid.'

It was a fine sight to see the child regarding this creeping fellow with a look of courage and disdain quite beyond her years. Even Daniel felt uncomfortable, and wished the affair over.

'You have no right to speak to me,' Mildred said imperiously. Then she turned again to Jerome Dawe.

'We are to go back to Mrs. Badger, are we not? You want to go, don't you, Violet?'

Violet with her wondering eyes still fixed on her sister's face, and too timid to speak aloud, made a movement of her lips for yes.

'She says yes,' Mildred cried eagerly. 'We both want to go back. O, we are to go back, are we not?'

This was addressed to Jerome Dawe, and Daniel, now seriously afraid that all his labours might be undone by the spirit of the child, caught her by the wrist, and, in an angry voice, said,

'You are only a baby, you! You must do what you are told, little missy! do you hear?'

Mildred wrested her hand out of his rude grasp, and, with a cheek on fire, she looked at him, irresolute for a moment.

'I know what to do,' she said at last. 'I remember what mamma did once.'

She walked to the bell and rang it, and then, looking at the group again, and seeing her maid, 'Little,' she said, 'show that person out.'

She indicated Daniel Ruddock with a queen-like wave of her hand, and so stood in the midst of the amazed group, every one of whom was too mean to be struck by the ludicrous side of the scene. For a moment, Mildred stood with her hand raised, and Violet was just beginning to cry for fear, and even Daniel was checked. But he roused himself, and now, with direct brutality and consciousness of strength, he called out,

'You minx! You saucy girl! You shall see who is your master.'

But little Mildred was not to be left any longer to struggle alone.

As Daniel Ruddock advanced towards her, the door of the room was suddenly flung open, and staggering, rather than walking, Sally Badger herself came in upon them. Fever was in her face, and her whole look was death-like, and so thunderstruck were all the group as, with an unearthly gaze, she looked round upon them, that no one saw Margaret Alexander, who followed her cousin into the room, and stood in the background silent.

'Who—has dared—has dared to do this?' asked Sally Badger, delivering her question with an emphasis which was the more terrible from the very fact that she was visibly struggling against mortal weakness.

She looked upon them all, and no one dared to speak; only little

Mildred walked to her side, and, taking her hand,

'O Mrs. Badger,' she said, in a low voice, 'I am so glad you have come.'

'Who has dared to do it?' demanded Sally again; and, with the fever blazing on her cheek, the awful light in her eyes, and the tremor of her frame, she was indeed a terrible spectacle.

Nobody spoke. Then, with terrific rapidity, Sally turned round on Daniel Ruddock, and stretched out her thin shaking hand:

'Uncle Jerome did not do this!' she said. 'It is you, you plotting, skulking reptile!'

Daniel Ruddock, in his early days, had often faced women desperate through poverty and oppression, and he knew that their rage is invariably too great for their strength. So now, emboldened by the very intensity of affairs, he resolved to stamp Sally down and win the day by force.

'I did,' he replied. 'You ain't fit to take charge of those girls; nobody is fit, except Mrs. Spring. And they are going to be taken off your hands, and this house too, and Mrs. Spring will manage them from this day!'

'Will she?' Sally asked, with a sudden quietude, which Daniel understood to signify an onset of weakness. 'Matty!—she!—will she?—indeed!'

'Yes,' replied Daniel, growing milder for policy's sake now that his point was about to be gained. 'It is kindly meant to you, Sally. You ought to be in your bed. It is all kindly meant. We must do our duty by everybody, and of course you cannot attend to those young girls. Now you go home and go to bed, Sally, and cover up warm, and take something hot. It's as much as your life's worth is this walk, you know!'

'Will you listen to me?' cried

Sally, with a feeble fierceness that was dreadful to see. 'I have made arrangements for the children. I have provided a protector for them.'

'The protector is Jerome's business,' remarked Daniel, growing angry again. 'Jerome can provide protectors for himself.'

'Hold your tongue!' retorted Sally fiercely. 'Uncle,' she said, turning to Jerome Dawe, 'I have asked Margaret, and she is going to take charge of the house and the children for the present.'

Daniel leaped with surprise. Till now he had not observed Margaret Alexander, but, looking round, he saw her calm face and composed attitude, and he knew that all was lost. Sally had chosen her ally well. Margaret Alexander was at this moment irresistible. Jerome neither could nor would refuse the proposed arrangement. Crafty Daniel was utterly and hopelessly beaten, and he knew it; and, with a murderous malice in his heart, he stood biting his nails and trying to cover his rage and disappointment. And supple Martha Spring, knowing how matters would turn, resolved to extricate herself from the complication.

'It's very kind of you, ma'am,' she said, fawning upon Mrs. Alexander; 'I am sure the young ladies will like it.'

This was the finishing stroke for Daniel Ruddock. He realised with renewed rage that his mean confederate was leaving him to bear alone the disgrace and the vexation of the position.

'What do you say, Jerome?' asked Sally, now in a breaking voice. 'You have confidence in Margaret, have you not?'

'Perfect confidence! perfect confidence!' replied that great man. 'Nothing can be better. I am satisfied; Matty is satisfied; and—and—and Daniel is satisfied!'

'In that case,' Sally Badger said, with a last effort, 'we had better get home. This has been too much for me. You can all—you can—all—go.'

And at this word Sally Badger sank down swooning in the centre of the floor.

CHAPTER XX.

IN WHICH IS DESCRIBED A MOST EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN IN THE STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

It was three o'clock one dull afternoon, and a young gentleman was walking down the Strand. Many other gentlemen, old and young, were doing the same, but our eyes follow this one in particular.

He was of small stature, and the word diminutive would well describe him; for not only was his height stunted, but his feet were small, his hands almost woman-sized, and his features curiously minute. We often see men of short stature, who, by breadth of shoulder, strength of limb, or bigness of head, make up for deficiency of height; but this young fellow was, throughout, a miniature. His face was finical, not to be impressed with any vigorous emotion. You could fancy the lad dancing prettily, or perhaps writing poetry, or composing songs; but the greater activities, the more forcible deeds of mankind, were not for his handling.

Gracefully enough he made his way through the crowd, with an occasional bow of apology as he jostled a passer-by, or was jostled himself. He was dressed with much care, and, though his steps were bent eastward, his dress and tie and gloves were of the fashion of the West-end. There was no-

thing of the City about this fine young man.

While he thus pursued his way eastward, another young fellow was coming westward, on the same side of the street. He was a striking contrast to our beau. Moderately tall, of broad strong build, and with a manly step, so he walked along. It was a good face too, one would say, with latent humour in it, kindness, and candour; but the marks of dissipation were plainer than anything else. Besides, the young man's dress was shabby and disordered, as if he had put it on hastily; his hat was dusty and unbrushed; he carried a rough stick in his hand; and altogether his appearance was disreputable. With a look of recklessness and uneasiness oddly mingled, and with eyes cast upon the ground, this youth made his way along, and whosoever he jostled or whoever jostled him, he held his way straightforward, and noticed nothing.

In a few seconds our trim little beau, whose eyes were all about him, spied this other advancing towards him; and the beau, by one or two expressive movements, made it quite plain that he wished to escape notice. He glanced across the street to measure the possibilities of flight; but a great van was passing and the way was muddy, and, casting a fond look at his nether attire, he decided that this movement could not be effected. Next he hoped to pass boldly by unseen, and this he had nearly done, when our shabby figure raised his eyes and exclaimed,

'Eugene!'

And Eugene Ruddock, with obvious discomfort, replied,

'How are you, Sholto?'

In spite of Sholto's shabby and dissipated look, there was in his greeting a taking frankness. He

was glad to see an old friend; glad, with that ready pleasure which shows a warm and companionable nature. It never struck Sholto that he was such a disreputable figure. These honest hearty folks never do understand when they are not wanted. Spruce Eugene could not refrain from considering his friend's discreditable exterior, and he did so with such unconscious openness that had Sholto been observing and sensitive he must have felt affronted. But Sholto, being glad to see his old friend, did not reflect that his old friend might be sorry to encounter him.

The two young men talked together for a few minutes, during which the momentary gleam that had lighted up Sholto's face died out, and he resumed his pre-occupied and distressed expression. Then, pointing to a tavern close at hand, he asked Eugene to step in and have a glass of beer.

'I never drink beer,' Eugene replied, with superfine scorn.

'Well, we might sit down and have a chat,' said Sholto, with a heavy sigh. 'I am worn and weary. Nobody will be there this time of day.'

'I think I must be walking on,' Eugene replied, hoping to shake off his friend.

'If you are walking on,' remarked Sholto, not seeing the other's drift, 'I will walk with you.'

'O, never mind,' replied Eugene, dreading the tavern less than the promenade. 'I can wait a bit; let us turn in here. You can have your glass of beer.'

So in they went, and down the narrow sawdusted passage which led the way to what was called the private entrance, as distinguished from the 'bottle and jug' department, at sight of which

Eugene shuddered. Sholto trod the sawdust like one used to it, but Eugene went delicately, consoling himself with the thought that they were going to a retired part of the establishment. To his dismay, when the 'private' glass door was thrust aside, instead of either solitude or respectable company, he beheld an unmistakable cabdriver drinking with a young man whose professional or social position was not discernible by the eye, but who was clad in a summer suit very old and very soiled, a greasy black hat, and a red necktie. This young personage, having seated himself on the counter, gave all who entered a full opportunity of seeing his trousers, shoes, and stockings, which were all very flashy, very worn, and very dirty.

'Have you such a thing as a penny smoke, miss?' asked the young man, who had something of a provincial address.

'Not I,' the young lady answered. 'Here are some two-penny cigars.'

'Good quality, miss?' asked the young man doubtfully.

'They are talked up wonderful,' the young lady replied.

'What I says is this,' the cabman remarked, now taking up an interrupted conversation. 'The Party that puts victuals into my stomach is the Party for me:

"Empty stomach, empty purse,
May be better, can't be worse."

And the speaker drained his glass with the air of a man who had made a display of argument and literature.

'Is this a private room?' Eugene asked, in a disgusted whisper.

Sholto, colouring a little, whispered back in his friend's ear,

'Rather a rough sort of place; but we medicals are not particular, and cannot be. They give

you a roll and a glass of beer here, and I often make that my lunch, you know. What will you take?

'Nothing, thank you,' Eugene answered fastidiously, moving as far from the young man on the counter as possible, while the young man regarded him with a stare. 'Don't let me hinder you.'

So Sholto called for a glass of beer; and as the cabdriver and his friend now left the place, and the young lady retired to her seat, the two friends were free to converse.

'I have a world of news to tell

you, Eugene,' Sholto said; 'I am so glad we have met. Come and sit down here.'

'I will not sit down, thank you,' Eugene answered, with another shudder. 'I can listen while I stand.'

They retired to a corner. Eugene held his natty cane to his mouth, and kept his chin in the air, trying by his posture to proclaim to any who might enter that he was there out of his element, a stranger and a superior. Sholto, who was full of eagerness to unburden his mind to his friend, did not notice these symptoms, but began to speak.

(To be continued.)

FAREWELL—GOOD-BYE!

MINE eye's so dim, I scarce can see thy face;
Yet while the life still stirs in this poor shell,
Stoop down, and on my quivering cold lips place
One last sweet kiss. Farewell, sweetheart, farewell!

Ah, do not say farewell! For bitter pain
Of endless severance is in that sound;
Ay, pain enough to daze the calmest brain,
And crush the loftiest spirit to the ground.

Ah no, say not farewell! It cannot be.
How should I, 'reft of thee, fare else but ill?
Whisper some word that better may agree
With my lone life, and comfort 'chance instil.

Say, God be with thee; darling, say good-bye;
That the dear God may hear thy last appeal,
And the strong Father's presence drawing nigh,
Like balm into my bruised heart shall steal.

Yes! say good-bye. 'Twill sound as thou hadst gone
A little way across a narrow stream;
Whom yet again, or e'er I've felt alone,
I shall embrace, and think the past a dream.

O sweet good-bye! taught by the gracious Friend,
Who, when from those He loved He must remove,
This blessing spoke, 'I'm with you to the end;
And so we say good-bye to those we love.

FRENCH COOKERY.

MATHEMATICIANS tell us that there are lines—say, a straight line and one of the legs of a hyperbola—which continually tend to approach each other, and yet, if infinitely produced in length, can never actually meet. The same is the case with modern civilisation. The tendency of contemporary thought and practice is towards uniformity, international assimilation, the gradual weakening of local prejudice, and the mutual adoption of each other's habits. We may believe, nevertheless, that the ways of the world—its likes and dislikes, its private preferences and its daily doings—will never be absolutely universal and identical.

Cookery has not escaped this cosmopolitan levelling and interchange, in the arts which minister to our daily life. As tailors and dressmakers take up and patronise whatever fashion strikes their fancy as good and new, without caring in what country it may happen to originate—Greek tunics, Tyrolean hats, Bernese bodices, Spanish mantillas—so English cooks and their employers give dinners *à la Russe*, and follow the modern French fashion of serving dishes singly and hot, instead of collectively in colossal courses, and cooled (four-fifths of them) before they can be tasted; while France has adopted English principles in the shape of warmed plates, underdone meats (which they cruelly call *saignants*, or bleeding), *tête de veau à la tortue*, changed from mock-turtle soup into a savoury entrée; and occa-

sional high-spiced dishes, such as *poulet à l'Indienne*, answering to Mullagatawnied chicken; and curry, under the pseudonym of *carrick*, or *kari*.

French cookery, always celebrated, has maintained its reputation, we may almost say its supremacy, by conforming itself to the ideas of the day and adopting an elegant simplicity; which simplicity, however, is more apparent than real, consisting not in the artlessness of the details, but in the absence of crowding and confusion in the groups.

Louis XIV.'s grand dinners were like his grand Palace of Versailles, vast, elaborate, complex, interminable, and inevitably wearisome. Dining was a ceremony of state, and not a needful act of refreshment. Such dinners were indispensable to the royal dignity. Consequently, similar dinners had to be set before the planetary personages who circulated about that kingly sun, at however great a distance they and their satellites might be from their great central orb. Those dinners followed the Grand Monarque whenever he set out upon his travels. We can understand Vatel's, the head-cook's, suicide on one of those occasions, because the sea-fish failed to arrive. It was not that the king and his court would not have enough to eat, and to spare. It was a breach of etiquette, a slight to the sovereign, of which he, Vatel, would have to bear the blame. He felt as the Lord Chamberlain might feel, were

Queen Victoria compelled to drive in a cab to go and open Parliament. Vatel was the victim of the inexorably massive and elaborate cookery then dominant. He could not bear the stress of its responsibility. His mind gave way, and he sought refuge in death.

And yet one of the simplest and best of dishes, the *poulet au cresson*, roast fowl on a bed of watercresses, is an invention of the old *régime*. In fact, the king himself was occasionally weary of the ceremonial on which he was the first to insist—justifying Frederick of Prussia's remark, that if he were King of France, he would keep another king to go through the forms of etiquette in his stead. It is not therefore surprising that Louis XIV. often dined in his chamber. The dinner was almost always *au petit couvert*—that is, he dined alone at a small square table. The meal was more or less abundant, as he gave his orders in the morning, either for *petit couvert* or *très-petit couvert*, a very frugal repast. But that very quiet meal always consisted of a great many dishes served in three courses, without reckoning the fruit—a proof that the royal appetite was hearty. Moreover, while eating, he was sparing of his speech, not caring to divide and decentralise his attention, or attempt to do two important things at once.

At a considerably later period, heavy dinners in England were a mark and a requisite accompaniment of social rank. When a wealthy country squire or nobleman posted up to London from his ancestral domain, his dinners, all along the road, ordered days beforehand, consisted of three solid and copious courses, with dessert and wine to match. On alighting, he entered the hotel

between a double line of the members of the establishment; and the bill at each halting-place, we may be sure, would more than cover the first-class fare of an ordinary railway journey. If we contrast all this with the portable sandwich-boxes, the basins of soup eaten at refreshment-rooms, the dinners *à la Russe*, and even the garden 'breakfasts' or 'teas' of the present age, we must confess that our modes both of entertainment and of home nutrition have undergone a sensible and salutary reform.

French cookery—by which we mean Parisian cookery, or the art as practised there, and in the other large central cities of France—is inventive, experimental, and, like ancient Athens, a passionate lover of something new. First-rate French cooks originate new dishes, as first-rate French dressmakers set new fashions. The world cannot go on everlastingly eating the same thing, or wearing the same costume. Every season, for instance, witnesses some new-fangled salad, ushered in with a high-sounding name, consisting of an unusual combination of ingredients, or with some one ingredient decidedly predominating. This has its run, at first either in a grand hotel, or a fashionable restaurant, or afterwards, generally, at the best tables throughout the town. The inventor keeps the secret as long as he can; but genius is sure to have imitators and plagiarists. The recipe passes from hand to hand, until the *salade à la Gabrielle d'Estrées*, grown old-fashioned and out of season with the departure of blanched celery, is dethroned by another *salade, à la bonne jardinière*, the natural outgrowth of cold cooked summer vegetables.

The same is the case with what would be small side-dishes, had

not side-dishes now gone out of date. Every cook who respects himself tries to produce something of his own, bearing the mark of the master-hand, like a picture or a newspaper *feuilleton*. His pride is to have it said about town (above all, to get it printed in a guide-book), 'To have such or such a thing in perfection you must go to such a restaurant.' Still better, if it be added, 'You can get some other thing nowhere else.' Occasionally, provincial culinary stars acquire a reputation which reaches the metropolis. Having once to visit Cherbourg, we were strongly recommended on no account whatever to leave without tasting a certain artist's roast lobsters, and also his *andouillettes*—taking each on separate days; because both those delicacies enjoyed at one meal would be too much for mortal palate to appreciate. The same artist's peach fritters—another speciality—were excellent; but the first-mentioned preparations were above all praise; people travelled miles to partake of them.

Some of these pleasing culinary inventions are fitted with names whose etymology is far from evident. Take, for example, *subrics* of rice. Had they been rubrics of rice, we might perhaps find a clue to their meaning. By whatever name, they are heartily welcome, especially to families who observe meagre days. The late and great Baron Brisse compounds them thus:

'Scald a pound of rice, and then boil it in milk, keeping it rather thick. When half-cold, incorporate with it a lump of butter, half a pound of grated cheese, and a few yolks of eggs. Taste and season as required and desired.

'Pour oiled butter into a small deep frying-pan; put in the cold rice, with its additions, by table-

spoonfuls, giving to each the form of a little cake. Over a moderate fire, make each of these *subrics* take colour on each side. Arrange them in a circle on a napkin, lapping one over the other, and serve.'

We may here note that French politeness, if growing beautifully less on some occasions, has taken refuge in cookery recipes. In the old style, as with us, the imperative mood was used. Thus, for *civet de lièvre*—stewed hare—the directions were: '*Coupez le lièvre en morceaux*'—'Cut the hare into pieces,' and so on; just as Mrs. Glasse said, 'First catch your hare.' The last bit of literary refinement is to use the infinitive mood; thus, instead of *coupez*, it would now be *couper le lièvre*—a mild suggestion, instead of a command. The words 'you ought,' or 'we advise you,' are understood, as grammarians say, at the opening of this urbane form of culinary instruction.

Illustration: SUBRICS AUX EPINARDS.—Blanchir les épinards dans de l'eau salée; les presser fortement; les hacher et les passer au beurre. Y incorporer ensuite un peu de farine; mouiller très sobrement avec de la crème, les assaisonner et finir par quelques jaunes d'œufs.

Quand l'appareil est bien travaillé, et qu'il a acquis une certaine consistance, procéder pour la cuisson comme il est dit ci-dessus.

Which, literally translated, would run: SPINACH SUBRICS.—(You will do well) to scald spinach-leaves in salted water; to squeeze them hard; to chop them and fry them slightly in butter; then to incorporate with them a little flour, to moisten them very soberly with cream, to season them and finish off with a few yolks of eggs.

When the preparation is well worked, and has acquired a certain consistence, (you are directed) to proceed with the cooking as above.

N.B. Spinach subrics, sweetened with sugar instead of being seasoned with salt and spice, make a very pretty dish for the close of dinner.

French cooks likewise imitate the milliners in another of their devices for insuring variety. When they have nothing actually new to offer, they ingeniously resuscitate the old. Paris accepts with equal good grace Louis XV. dresses and Louis XIV. dishes. All it positively insists upon is to have to-day something different from yesterday's fare and fashion. And, indeed, the traditions of the old *régime* ought never to fall into utter oblivion. Some dishes appear to resist the lapse of ages. *Gâteau de Savoie*, commonly called sponge-cake, carried to Japan by Jesuit missionaries, has been found there naturalised after two hundred years. The provinces stick more persistently to the cookery, as well as to the costumes, of their forefathers; still, a change is gradually coming over the spirit of their kitchen. As there is not a nook in the land which has not been penetrated by tight-fitting tops and frizzled front hair, so do the *Petit Journal*, the *Figaro*, and other daily publications continually acquaint every village cook with the latest innovations and revolutions of the stewpan.

French roasting is sometimes very bad, and sometimes very good: the first, when the joint is cruelly baked in the oven of a cooking-stove; the second, when the operation is performed by a jack and a spit (or even on a spit without the clockwork jack) before a good fire. A fowl or a turkey toasted in one of those tinned iron

cases, sometimes called *tambours* or American ovens, will come out with credit to itself and its toaster. But an excellent mode of roasting is generally practised which deserves more frequent adoption in England—namely, the plan of roasting in a stewpan over a mere handful of fire, which is preferable to any mode for small joints and poultry, which otherwise are apt to get dried up, and perhaps burnt outside.

Try, as a specimen dish, DUCK, so roasted, and GREEN PEAS. After plucking, singeing, and emptying your duck, cut off the neck close to the shoulders, tuck the feet behind the back, put the liver inside it, and stuff it, if you like (to Anglicise it), with chopped onion, sage, and breadcrumbs, not over-seasoned with pepper and salt.

Line the bottom of a stewpan with a slice of bacon, a few shreds of fresh meat, the neck and gizzard of the duck, a carrot cut in thick slices, a bay (not a laurel) leaf and a few sprigs of parsley tied together in a bunch, and an onion stuck with two or three cloves. Pepper and salt with great moderation. On these lay your duck. Cover the stewpan close, set it on the fire, and let the contents sweat two or three minutes, shaking them from time to time. Keep turning the duck till it is browned all over, then moisten with a little broth and either a dram-glass of brandy or a wine-glass of white wine. Cover close again, and let the duck simmer gently over a very slow fire until done enough.

Meanwhile, put into a frying-pan a thin slice of ham; when well browned, moisten with broth, and then pour the whole into another stewpan. Add your green peas to this, pour over them only just enough broth or water to

cover them, and boil them until they begin to fall into a mash.

If the duck is to be sent to table whole, it will be more convenient for the carver to have the peas presented on a separate dish; but if the duck is to be handed round cut up into joints, the peas may be poured out on the dish, and the joints distributed over their surface.

Legs and shoulders of early lamb, as well as small joints of veal or quite young pork, are likewise fit subjects for roasting in a stewpan.

Please note the caution respecting the laurel-leaf. In many English recipes, particularly for sweet dishes such as custards and creams, you are told to flavour with a crushed *laurel* leaf, which is a misdirection caused by mistaking the *laurier* of French cookery-books (also called *laurier à sauce*, to distinguish it from the other laurel), which *laurier* is the true *Laurus nobilis* or noble laurel, commonly called by us the sweet bay—by mistaking this for the ordinary large and shining leaved laurel of suburban gardens, which is not a laurel at all, but a cherry, *Cerasus lauro-cerasus*, *Laurier cerise*. The two plants are quite different, and belong even to different natural families. But, in consequence of this mistake, cooks often add a cherry-laurel leaf to their custards and such-like, which communicates to them a nutty prussic-acid flavour, not unpleasant, but which might become injurious, and which, above all, is not the thing intended. For the true bay-leaf is simply and purely aromatic, with a perfume approaching to that of cinnamon. The bay-tree is a laurel, and is a near relation to the camphor-tree, *Laurus camphora*, a highly useful and medicinal plant. The *Bon Jardinier* warns against

the commission of precisely the same error in France. 'By a not unfrequent piece of imprudence,' it says, 'cherry-laurel leaves are employed to aromatise boiled milk, without any suspicion being entertained that too strong a dose might be poisonous.'

In order fully to appreciate French cookery we ought to consider what the French think of it themselves. Brillat-Savarin is too well known and classical an author to be more than referred to on the present occasion. Nestor Roqueplan, the most Parisian of Parisians, who was abruptly removed from us in the prime of his vogue and his intellect, at what his friends called the premature age of sixty-five, held that cooking is not a trade, but an art. The conversation of a first-rate man-cook was to him a piece of enjoyable good fortune. Far better, he thought, is it to gossip with a cook than to hold serious talk with an apothecary. If all cooks were good cooks, apothecaries might shut up shop. Doctors would disappear, and we should keep surgeons only to draw decayed teeth and set broken bones. His ideas coincided with the President Hénault's, who said that the only difference between Brinvilliers, the poisoner of her nearest relations, and Madame du Deffant's cook, was that the latter did not commit wilful murder.

According to the same authority, out of France eating becomes impossible. The countries inhabited by the Germanic races are cloyed by a deluge of mawkish sweetnesss, only fit for babes and invalids. Their boasted partridges are proved by experience to be either overgrown like turkey-poults or dwarfed and stunted like consumptive sparrows. Their hares are tall fellows, well shot up o' legs, who make off at the

rate of forty knots an hour—excellent runners, but very poor eating, and with no proper pride in their appearance at table. Alexandre Dumas the elder, he tells us, never visited a foreign country without its sovereign's giving him handsome entertainment, and decorating him with one of his orders; and never did he seat himself at a foreign table and partake there of an unknown dish without inquiring how it was prepared. England is the only country from which Dumas brought back neither a decoration nor a sauce—objects which that austere people (remember it is Nestor Roqueplan who speaks) regard with equal indifference. Alexandre Dumas was a discriminating gourmand, delicate, as became a man of genius. Weak stomachs, nevertheless, should be cautious of following his regimen. *Apropos* to which, a doctor one day said, 'Put into a mortar, and pound well together, the same ingredients which a gentleman in good health will eat when he goes out to dinner—pepper, mustard, sauces, truffles, meats, game, wines, brandy, liqueurs, and the rest. Make the whole into a poultice, and apply it to your leg; in no time it will raise you a pretty blister.' It shows no little native stamina that the grandfathers of the present race of Frenchmen—sharp-set after high-seasoned sauces, great lovers of *ragôts*—for whom burgundy wine alone represented drink; champagne, amusement; bordeaux claret, low diet—lived long, in spite of it, and enjoyed good health, although they every day applied an internal sinapism to their stomachs.

Naturally, Nestor Roqueplan cannot speak of French cookery, and the transformations it is undergoing, without paying a tribute of

respect to the amiable shade of Brillat-Savarin, by insisting on the fact that cookery plays a most important part in life, affecting both our health, our pleasure, and our intellect. Did not Madame de Genlis boast, with the consciousness of having done a good deed, of having taught a German lady, who had received her kindly, how to prepare as many as seven delicious dishes? To the aphorisms of the *Physiologie du Goût* he adds that the man who takes no thought of the aliments which he ingests is comparable to the pig in whose trough you may mingle anything indifferently—the pettitoes of his own little son, a pair of old braces, a wisped-up newspaper, and a set of dominoes. But piggy, in fact, is no such fool, as natural-historical farmers will tell you.

French cookery has lost much of its originality and its special characteristics. We find no more houses wholly devoted to Flemish cookery, others to Norman, Lyonnaise, Toulousaine, Bordelaise, and Provençale cookery; and yet France is the country where the pleasures of the table are the most highly vaunted, if not the most enjoyed. Cookery being an art entirely the result of practice, time, and patience—a compendium of observations, whose application is made subordinate to the divers tastes of the persons whom it endeavours to please—it has necessarily obeyed the law of mutual exchange which now governs the intercourse of civilised nations. It has also to take account of the nervous development which the agitations of actual life have introduced into the constitution of individuals.

The first striking fact presented by the cookery in French private houses is the ever-increasing spread of underdone meat. It

may be accounted for not only by Anglomania, not only by the idleness of cooks, who like to get their work over as soon as possible, but still more by the weakness of stomachs seeking to gain strength by the use of natural juices. That is supposed to be the reason why people, otherwise fastidious, bear, with little or no repugnance, the aspect of joints of beef and mutton which look as if they had only been shown to the fire. Their fathers did not understand the conversion of the pantry into a raw-meat safe, and only allowed an approach to it for game, which they ate not red, but rosy.

As to sundry introductions from Germany, they have obtained in France but small success. Sweet preserves, mixed with meat gravy, are looked upon as fanciful ingredients, whose flavour is only fit to tickle the palates of growing girls and sickly women. Our currant jelly, with roast mutton and hare, is not yet naturalised; a clove of garlic stuck in the former is greatly preferred. But prejudices are hard to conquer, especially with respect to eating; the French may, therefore, be excused if they are prejudiced like other folk. They have not yet accepted rhubarb for tarts, but only as an ornamental plant in public gardens; while sea-kale, although highly spoken of year after year in the *Bon Jardinier*, is scarcely known beyond the precincts of English colonies.

Sauces and *ragoûts* are included in the art of cookery; but sauce-making is a delicate performance, which, grumblers complain, like the race of confidential servants, is fast disappearing from *bourgeois* households. The more's the pity; for a painter who makes up his palette badly, filling it with inharmonious shades of

colour, and then produces a frightful picture, does harm to nobody but himself. A cook, who has done his marketing, prepared his gravies, measured his ingredients, and then has neither a happy inspiration nor a certainty of touch, compromises the stomachs of whole families when he spoils his dinner. For that reason, Nestor Roqueplan asserts, French cooks are the only cooks in the civilised world. Other nations have various notions about the preparation of food; the French alone understand cookery, because all their qualities—their promptitude, decision, tact—are thereby brought into play. You never knew a foreigner, he adds, succeed in making good white sauce! But when his shade encounters Mrs. Rundall in the Elysian Fields, will he dare to tell her she knew nothing about melted butter? Dante, if there, should describe the meeting; for a row in those regions would be inevitable.

Ever since the year 1857—thanks to Dr. Yvan's experiments on horseflesh—French cookery has been unable to avoid mixing itself up with hippophagy. Horse-steak has become an accomplished fact. Hitherto many people have eaten horse without saying a word about it, and even without suspecting it. Professed *gourmets* have ostentatiously assembled to taste and enjoy that tempting viand. To quarrel with the hippophagi would be absurd; it is useless to argue with new-made converts; but the parties who were the most likely to profit by the fancy would appear to be the cab proprietors. After their live-stock was used up, they could convert it into beef. The fashion, however, has quite lost its freshness. There is no need now to discuss the superiority of flavour of this or that

joint of horse—whether the fillet ought to be larded or not for roasting—whether horse liver should be dressed *à l'Italienne* or in a *pâté*; and whether parsley, in the nostrils of a horse's head, is as becoming a garnish as for a calf's. In reality, and happily, ostensible hippophagy is on the decline; it may be practised unwittingly with sausages, hams, and especially with tongues; but Paris holds long to nothing new. Horse-butchery there culminated at about the date of the last exhibition but one, and has ever since been gradually waning, although not yet quite extinct.

During the Christmas week the Parisian population consumes about eight miles of pudding, black and white. Immense consideration and unflagging sympathy are enjoyed by this eatable and its analogies, such as sausages, *cervelas* (flat sausages wrapped in leaf fat), and *andouilles* (sausages made of pigs' chitterlings, tripe, or the white part of calf's pluck, sometimes called the frill). Black-pudding is as old as the Roman civilisation, which introduced it to Gaul under the name of *botellus* or *botulus*. The gourmand Apicius, to whom a treatise on cookery is attributed, gives a recipe for Roman pudding; only his pudding is the *white* pudding. At Rome, during the Saturnalia, the time of unrestrained joviality, garlands of puddings festooned the doors of the *suarii* or *boarii*, the classic dealers in swine and oxen. The custom, therefore, of eating black or white pudding, to express 'What's the odds, so long as you're happy' mounts to a tolerably respectable antiquity.

In England the extreme of distress is described by saying that a man is so poor that he is obliged to go without his Christmas plum-pudding. In Germany, Spain,

and Italy, saurkraut, olives, and mortadella are the invariable symbols of general rejoicing. In Russia the frost excites national feasting, and open-air cooks fry their fat scraps of meat at fairs held on the frozen Neva. In France black-pudding is the traditional treat—accessible to the poor man who buys a bit at the corner of the street; agreeable to the millionaire who receives it from his estate in the country, twisted round and round in coils like the black python in *Salammbô*.* People of quality in former times did not disdain to give it a place in their figurative language. *Faire un boudin*, 'to make a black-pudding,' meant a poor *gentilhomme's* marrying a rich plebeian's daughter.

The natural history of the *Trichina spiralis* dealt a heavy blow on French-reared pork, in which, moreover, you cannot always place perfect confidence. American pork has suffered even worse, from its reputed infestation by the spiral worm—the surest safeguard against which is long and thorough cooking. The French pig, in the neighbourhood of towns, often lives on butchers' offal, and nobody knows what else besides. It is a singular system of alimentation, which is not without its adopters at home. Certain ham and sausage-makers of Villeneuve (department of the Lot), to set their customers' minds at rest, employed, they assured them, none but *pure meat*. What can *impure* meat be? It makes one shudder to think of it.

Diners out in Paris have often complained that their pleasure is not unalloyed. Few people, when they take it into their heads to give a dinner, conscientiously con-

* A strange ancient Carthaginian romance, published in Paris some years ago, and probably known to few of our readers.

sider the experiment they are making on their fellow-creatures. An entertainer's principal preoccupation is to display his plate, his furniture, and his wife's fine dresses. Nothing need be said of the comical dinner, where you eat mysterious vol-au-vent, red-fleshed turbot, and suspicious game; where the mistress of the house organises at dessert an interminable defile of faded sweets, all whose names she tells you, having purchased them herself. It is a trap in which you are caught, and at which you laugh by and by. We are speaking of the ordinary dinner, which is respectfully bad without being ridiculous; of the dinner called *un dîner de bonne maison*, because it is served by two wretches in livery, headed by another wretch generally tall, dressed all in black, and adorned with the title of *maître d'hôtel*, who carves the dishes in such a way that all the tid-bits are left for the kitchen.

One of the great sorrows of dining out is the uniformity of the organisation and of the bill of fare. Whoever has eaten one such dinner has eaten a hundred. Nor are English dinners exempt from this reproach. 'Cock and pacon again!' exclaimed the German traveller when, for the twentieth time, he sat down to fowls at top and ham at bottom. 'De English do live on nothing but cock and pacon!' Paris dinners out are not more varied. After soup, which is merely pale broth with a few white pasty lozenges sinking to the bottom, 'Madeira!' exclaims, without laughing, a footman, who pretends to believe that he holds in his hand a bottle of the real wine. 'Château Yquem '47!' shouts another mystifier, as if he didn't know that he was filling your glass with a mixture of small Lunel diluted with

Grave. 'Turbot! Caper-sauce! Shrimp-sauce!' You begin to get savage. 'We are done,' experienced people mutter to themselves. 'There is now no escaping the *filet de bœuf aux champignons farcis*.' Then you grow desperate and give it up. You eat a little of everything; you poison yourself with a variety of tiny morsels; you nibble and swallow your viaticum or passport for the other world. At dessert you would be thankful for a slice of plain boiled beef.

One reason why the dinner out in Paris is unsatisfactory, as well as unwholesome, is that so few people keep up a cellar, and that the great majority of dinner-givers buy their wine for the occasion. Now, good old genuine wine will invest a simple well-dressed dinner with a halo of distinction acknowledged by everybody. As to dinners brought ready cooked to the house, it is best not to discuss them further. Ready-made dinners rank even lower than ready-made clothes.

A dinner out is apt to be a failure when its object is not clearly defined. If it is an act of politeness, it misses its mark when the dinner is not good. If it is a party of *gourmandise*, an epicurean rendezvous, it then becomes a serious affair from which ladies are usually excluded, because ladies keep people waiting, never arriving in time. And then they wear dresses expressly made to creep between the legs of their neighbours' chairs. And then they don't eat; they have dined at luncheon; so that the men sitting next them are ashamed to eat. And then French women prolong the dessert and encourage its absurd profusion.

It is related that Lord Lyndhurst, when somebody asked him which was the best way to suc-

ceed in life, replied, 'Give good wine.' A French statesman would have answered, 'Give good dinners,' which implies good wine and something besides, and would have carried out the advice into practice himself. Talleyrand kept the most renowned table of his day, but quite as much for hygienic as for political reasons, in the belief that well-considered and carefully-executed cookery strengthened the health and prevented illness. At eighty years of age he spent an hour every morning with his cook, discussing the dishes to be served at dinner, which was his only meal; for in the morning all he took was two or three cups of camomile tea before sitting down to work. In Paris he dined at eight; in the country at five. After a short stroll, if the weather was fine, he had his game of whist; and then, retiring to his study, indulged in what was really an after-dinner nap. His flatterers said, 'The prince is meditating.' Those who had no need to flatter him merely observed, 'Monseigneur is asleep.' The Emperor, who was no epicure nor even a connoisseur, was nevertheless pleased with Talleyrand's luxurious and refined hospitality, in consequence of the impression it made on those who were so fortunate as to partake of it.

The office of dinner-giver to court guests was also shared during the First Empire by Cambacérès, who thereby attained considerable celebrity. He is reproached, nevertheless, by the illustrious cook Carême with culinary ignorance and parsimony. His morning consultations with his *chef* or head cook, M. Grand'Manche, were entirely directed to cutting down the expenses. At each course of the dinner he noted the *entrées* which had not been

touched, or very little; and the next day he included them in his bill of fare. Not, Carême thinks, that cold dishes should never reappear; but in a great man's establishment they ought only to be employed with precaution, skill, and, above all, in silence. In his quality of archichancelier, Cambacérès received from the provinces innumerable presents of eatables and poultry. All these were stowed away in a large pantry, of which he kept the key. They were never served quite fresh at his table; and frequently, when he gave the order to use them, they were spoiled.

Cambacérès himself was no gourmand in the true acceptation of the word. He had a hearty, even a voracious, appetite. Quantity with him was more important than quality. One of his favourite *hors d'œuvres* was a piece of *pâte* crust warmed up on a gridiron, or he would ask for the remnant of a ham that had been cut at all the week long. He was fond of solid and vulgar things which simply served to fill his stomach. To sum up Carême's opinion, '*il n'a jamais su manger*,' he never knew the art of eating.

There may exist philosophers who professedly scorn to bestow so much thought on their daily food. But as we bring into the world with us the necessity of eating something at least three times a day, it is no proof of wisdom, but the contrary, to affect indifference respecting the substance and preparation of what we eat. For it is useless to deny that we all share the nature of the lady immortalised in the nursery rhyme:

'There was an old woman, and—what do you think?—
She lived upon nothing but victuals and drink.'

THE FOREIGNERS.

BY ELEANOR C. PRICE, AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS,'
'VALENTINA,' ETC.

CHAPTER X.

THE RICH AUNT.

MISS LUCIA MOWBRAY, by right of her riches, was the chief person in the family. She was George Mowbray's aunt, or rather his half-aunt; for his grandfather had married twice. The first wife was the mother of one son, the father of George and his brothers and sisters. The second wife was a Miss Dunstan, an heiress, of an old Somersetshire family. As her fortune was settled upon her own children, it all came to her only daughter Lucia, who had never married, and could leave it to whoever she pleased. She was now getting on for seventy, and no one knew who was to be her successor. She was known to have made several wills and destroyed them. She was a woman of many whims. No one could be more generous when it suited her fancy, and when her heart was touched; but she had no notion of managing her affairs on any steady principle. She alternately made a pet of George Mowbray and laughed at him; she respected his wife and laughed at her. His brothers and sisters seldom came in her way. They and their children wrote her affectionate letters; she was friendly with them all, but never asked them to stay with her. That treat was reserved for George and his children, who lived nearest to her.

The Mowbrays generally were supposed to think that if aunt Lucia did her duty she would

divide her fortune among them all, leaving her house to the eldest—a hard-working barrister. But aunt Lucia's view of her duty was not at all certain to be the same as theirs; and she had alarmed them a few years ago by a very eccentric proceeding.

There was an account in the newspapers of a dreadful fever, which had seized upon one of the northern colliery districts. It was almost as bad as the Eyam fever that everybody has read of: the people died by hundreds, and the difficulty was to find any one to nurse the sick or bury the dead. Still, one may be assured that the stricken place was not without its devoted men and women, whose courage and humanity became heroic action when they were called out thus.

Miss Lucia Mowbray sat in her study in the south, and read the accounts of this fever. One of the prominent names among those who were spending themselves in self-forgetting work was that of a curate, Benjamin Dunstan. It was an uncommon name, and Miss Mowbray watched for further news of him. Presently she saw that his work was over for the time; the fever had seized upon him, and he lay hopelessly ill among his dying people. Miss Mowbray was very uneasy; she could think of nothing but this young man, the owner of her old family name, dying alone among coal-pits and blackness and misery. She hardly knew who he could be. The only Dunstan

she knew of was an utterly good-for-nothing cousin, who had gone out unmarried to Australia years before. Being impatient and curious, she wrote a letter of inquiry to the vicar of the town which lay nearest to the fever district, and had his characteristic answer by return of post.

'Dear Madam,—The story of my friend Ben Dunstan is a remarkable one. It is, perhaps, already finished; for I doubt whether the poor fellow is alive at this moment. He is probably a relation of yours. I have heard him say that his father belonged to Somersetshire. But he was not likely to make himself known to you, for Ben, though certainly a poor relation, is not one of the sort that comes to beg. He was born in Western Australia, where his father and mother died. Ben was then sixteen and friendless. He packed up his small fortune in a belt round his waist, worked his way home to England on board various ships, and made straight for Cambridge, where he lived for two years in a garret, working night and day. By this time he knew more than many dons, for his one idea from his cradle has been to educate himself, and he has an astonishing memory. My brother, who is a tutor at Wolsey, got hold of him and gave him a few hints, after which Ben went in for a Wolsey scholarship, and got it easily. After leaving college he came to his present curacy at Forest Moor; but the climate is too cold for him, and his health was spoilt before these trying times came upon him. Now he is dying in harness like a brave soldier. Though his life has not been rosy, I never heard him once complain, or suggest that he might have been better used. He

has made a fight for it, and I honour the fellow, and am sorry that your interest in him was not awakened before it was too late, which I fear is the case now. But Ben was never the man to hunt up his rich connections. As to his present position, he has neighbours' fare, and that is not luxurious. I would go to him myself; but I was always clumsy about nursing; and other claims—those of my wife and children, and my large parish—must come before those of poor Ben and his infectious fever. I shall be glad to answer any further questions, or to carry out your wishes in any way.—Believe me yours truly,

'JOHN SMITH.'

'Poor dear fellow! He is Robert's son, of course, though why on earth they called him Benjamin!' exclaimed Miss Mowbray to her nephew George, who was at breakfast with her when she received this letter. 'What can I do for him? I can't send anybody, and I can't have him here; but I must do something.'

'You can have him here as soon as they can move him safely,' said George, with cheerful unworldliness.

'Of course I can. I must write at once to this worthy Mr. Smith, and tell him so. I hope he isn't dead, for I feel as if he would interest me.'

'The young fellow? O no, he won't die,' said George.

He did not repent of his suggestion, though his wife lifted her eyebrows when she heard of it—not even when Ben Dunstan, well on in his recovery, came and stayed the whole winter with Miss Mowbray at Croome Court. He was an odd creature, rough, grave, and yet cheerful, with broad and Radical ideas which did not at all suit the neighbourhood.

His manners were considered detestable, and nobody liked him much except Miss Mowbray herself, and George with his wide sympathies.

In the spring he declared himself quite well, and escaped back joyfully to his old work at Forest Moor. He held on there for two or three more years, suffering constantly from the cold north-country air, after which the Rector of Croome went away to a better living, and Miss Mowbray, to most people's consternation, offered Croome to her cousin Ben. He was not much obliged to her, for he disliked the people and ways of the south; but after all it seemed weak to stay where he was and die in three or four years, as the doctors prophesied. So he accepted Miss Mowbray's offer, and came down to Croome.

'I sha'n't stay here all my life, you know,' was the first thing he said to her.

'Nobody asked you to do that,' said Miss Mowbray. 'Stay as long as you can bear us.'

Ben Dunstan had now been at Croome two years. He was quite strong again, and was beginning to grow restless. The best of the people down there liked him better than at first, though he did not try to please them; he did his duty in an uncompromising sort of way, and the civil manners of the south were wasted upon him. The labourers seemed to him a poor, dull set, abjectly contented, or else afraid to speak their minds. Miss Mowbray declared that the Rector had spent a whole afternoon trying to make her gardener strike for higher wages, and then had come in to call on her, muttering,

'Wretch, whom no sense of wrongs can rouse to vengeance,
Spiritless outcast!'

Ben Dunstan made a habit of

coming to see Miss Mowbray between four and five on Sunday afternoon, when his service in church was over. He was always happiest on Sundays; it was his holiday, and the only day on which he seemed able to enjoy the lovely country he lived in. The high rocky fields with their wide blue distances, the deep lanes and romantic valleys, coloured red, gray, and green, with here and there a picturesque half-hidden cottage, like a nest of stones and thatch, were not quite so desolate to him as on week-days. He used to walk down from his pretty rectory to the Court, if one must confess it, with a pipe in his mouth and a rose in his button-hole, a white fox-terrier, his dearest friend, keeping close at his heels. Such ways as these made people say that he was neither clerical nor gentleman-like. In his dress, too, he consulted comfort more than correctness. But, you see, he was a young man from the Black Country, springing originally from Australia—a person quite sure to be out of place in a really respectable English parish.

So, one summer Sunday afternoon, he came in this guise down the hill. Croome Court lay in a hollow by the river, far below the level of the church and rectory. It was a large old house, which had once been much larger. The Dunstons, unlike their descendant Miss Mowbray, had been a prudent race, and had pulled the place down by degrees to lessen their expenses. One of them had built a mill quite close to the Court—so near that its buildings were only divided from the garden by a high wall and a row of elm-trees. The road passed not far from the front of the house, which had an air of Queen Anne. Its lower windows were arched with thick branches of

wistaria, and the smooth lawn in front was bright with flowers. The rest of the garden, with the stable-yard behind it, was away to the right of the house; the mill, hidden by stately old trees, was on the left. All this lay between the road and the little river, which wandered away into meadows where old thorn-bushes clustered, and forest trees were scattered here and there. Miss Mowbray had let the mill and the farms, and all the land up to her gates. She had no taste for farming, but cared a good deal for her garden, where the flowers grew as if they returned her affection.

People said that her life must be very dull; if so, it was her own fault. But she was an odd woman, and did not love her neighbours much; and very few of them were capable of understanding her. Her eldest nephew, the barrister, said that aunt Lucia ought to have lived in London, where she would have been both amused and appreciated. Once or twice she had talked the subject over with him seriously, but she went on living comfortably at Croome.

Her drawing-room was a very large square room, full of pretty things and comfortable old-fashioned furniture. She always lived in it; her books and work were scattered about on tables and sofas, and her favourite plants were in a conservatory outside one of the windows. There were several large mirrors, before which she sometimes stopped to look at herself. This was a habit that the young Mowbrays thought quite dreadful in a great-aunt nearly seventy. Their father told them that a little vanity was not a bad thing in a woman, and that he remembered aunt Lucia the most fascinating of women.

'She's that still, in my opinion,' he said chivalrously.

'O papa!' howled a chorus.

'Yes, you cubs,' said Mr. Mowbray, 'with your red hands and burnt faces, do you suppose beauty and elegance come to a woman entirely in spite of herself?'

'Why, there's Polly!' cried one of the younger girls. '*She* never looks in the glass.'

'O, doesn't she?' said Mr. Mowbray, smiling.

'Well, she won't when she's aunt Lucia's age.'

'Probably not, if she never does now.'

When the Rector came in that afternoon, Miss Mowbray was watering her ferns in the conservatory. He took the watering-pot and finished them for her; then they went back into the wide shady drawing-room, and Ben, who was hot and tired, threw himself into an armchair. Miss Mowbray looked at him, and smiled kindly. It was a mystery why these two people should like each other so much, they were such an utter contrast in everything.

Ben Dunstan was a very solid-looking young man. He was rather short, broad, and square; even his face was square, with a most decided chin. His forehead was low and broad, and he had a habit of frowning; his hair had a tendency to curl, not prettily, but stiffly and obstinately. His eyes alone brightened up a heavy and grave face; they were very intelligent, of a lively hazel colour, with the light rim round the iris that gives a certain flash and spirit to some people's glance. There was nothing refined about Mr. Dunstan's appearance; he was only not coarse-looking; his father might have been a blacksmith or a wagoner. He was a man, that

was all, with a will and a character, accidentally born a gentleman.

It may seem strange to draw a comparison between a young man and an old woman, but it was still more strange that those two should be relations. Miss Lucia Mowbray was tall, slight, delicate, made altogether after the fashion of an aristocrat. Though she stooped a little, her pretty shoulders still retained their grace. She was like a lovely piece of thin old china. Her face was wonderfully pretty, as well in expression as in features; it was all life and fun, gentleness, cleverness, with a touch of irony; when she smiled, it was like a spirit breaking through the thinnest veil of material. With all this, there was a glance in her large blue eyes—they were still young—which gave one the idea of a not very sensible woman. Her strong-minded severe great-nephews and nieces thought she was very silly; but young people cannot always understand the youth of old age. She had none of what one may call the airs of an old woman—I mean the authority, the taking a certain position proper to grandmothers and great-aunts and old ladies generally, especially rich ones. And this was not because she had never married. Lucia Mowbray would have been exactly the same woman if she had been married three times over. She had her own graceful, careless, simple, unaffected ways; she acted according to her humours; she often wore clothes that orthodox people thought too young for her; she sat in no special chair, had a hundred little fancies, and was always wandering about the house and garden. She was idle, and yet occupied; thoughtless, and yet kind-hearted; full of faults

and inconsistencies, and yet charming.

Mr. Dunstan began to talk to his patroness about parish matters. There were two or three old charities at Croome, endowed by his ancestors, which it was his dearest wish to sweep entirely away; they pauperised the people, he said, and were quite out of date.

‘A great many of our people would be in the workhouse without them,’ said Miss Mowbray.

‘So they tell you, of course. But I know that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it is a man’s own fault if he comes to the workhouse. Give him fair wages, let him be industrious and saving, and don’t starve his soul by giving him alms—he will be all right enough. These doles are enough to ruin the morals of a whole parish, and they have done their work uncommonly well at Croome.’

‘What nonsense you talk!’ said Miss Mowbray; ‘the people are poor, and one must help them. These charities are a blessing to them.’

‘No, a curse. The system is bad from its foundation.’

‘That does not signify to me,’ said Miss Mowbray.

‘I should have thought it did.’

‘No; I think the founders of these things were probably much wiser than I am, and I would rather plant things than pull them up.’

‘Of course, planting is a very fine thing; but—’

‘You think I have not done much in that way? Why, I have planted *you*, and now you can’t find room for yourself in the parish without pulling up all the institutions older than yourself. What a restless spirit you are! Grow, can’t you, and let the old roots alone. The soil of England

is full of them; you won't find a clear place for yourself!

'That notion of being planted is a very awful one,' said Ben, looking at her gravely. 'It won't do at all. That was partly what I wanted to talk to you about. If I can't do anything here, you know, that settles the question. I had better go at once.'

'Because of the charities?'

'Not entirely,' said Ben, 'though you know my objection to all those old things. But I am doing no good here. I preach my very best to the people; they don't listen—they gape and snore. If they do hear a few words, they go home and say, "Never heard a parson talk a that'ns." I never shall get used to their humbugging ways. "Pleese, zur—" I'm sick of the sound of it. When I gave them those science lectures last winter, they thought it was witchcraft. They are sly, too; they say and do things behind one's back. You are never sure you have got at the worst of them.'

'You are tired of not being appreciated?' said Miss Mowbray.

'I wish it was only that—I could manage that sort of tiredness. But don't you see—besides my character, and ways, and teaching being quite unsuited to them, it is simply a waste of strength. Here am I,' said Ben, stretching out his arms, 'a great powerful fellow, with a loud voice that would fill any church, and a taste for work among masses of people. This little place has been a rest to me, of course. I should most likely have died if I had not come here. I don't forget that, I assure you. I'm very thankful for all that.'

'Don't let me hear of anything so degrading and soul-starving as thankfulness,' said Miss Mowbray, turning away, and putting up her hands.

The Rector smiled. He was used to this sort of teasing, and apparently rather liked it. As he was silent Miss Mowbray became more serious. She took a chair near him, and looked at him with an air of thoughtful consideration.

'You want to go away, then?' she said. 'Is there nothing that would keep you here? I would rather have you than any one else.'

'Thank you. But I cannot see that I am of any use to you.'

'No, certainly you are not. In fact, you are troublesome; you put all sorts of inconvenient things into one's head. And of course it is your duty to go away, as you don't like the people. I understand that. You would not do anything so disagreeable to me, unless you really felt it was your duty.'

Ben sat looking at her with a slow, quaint smile. 'When you put it in that way—' he began.

'No,' said she, 'I don't put it in that way. It is unfair and selfish. But I shall be sorry for myself and all these poor creatures, if we lose you. If there is anything I can do to keep you here, I will do it. I will, really.'

'You are very good, but I would rather not be bribed,' said Ben. 'There are lots of men who would suit you and the place better than I do. I told you when I first came that I should not spend my life here. I have had no reason at all to alter that intention. I have tried my hand at it, and it won't do. I am the square man in the round hole. You won't dispute that, at least?'

'Sticking firmly to truth, I don't think I can,' said Miss Mowbray. 'But still, my square friend, I think you might adapt yourself. This country is good for you physically, if not mentally. Shall I give you a prescription for getting rid of your restlessness?'

'If you like.

'Marry.'

Ben whistled rather ruefully, and shrugged his shoulders.

'Don't you like the idea?' said Miss Mowbray.

'I never thought about it much. I am not fond of ladies' society, as you know; and a clergyman's wife is generally a hindrance to him.'

'Nonsense!'

'Well, I wonder what I should have done at Forest Moor with a wife and six small children hanging on to me.'

'You would have learnt the meaning of self-sacrifice,' said Miss Mowbray. 'However, this is not a savage place like Forest Moor, but a nice healthy village with a house much too large for a bachelor. So don't argue in that silly way. And don't speak rudely of women in my presence, if you wish me to respect you. Did you never see any one you would have liked to marry?'

'I have seen one woman that I admired,' said Ben gruffly. 'But I might as well whistle for the moon. And she is too ornamental for every day, besides. That is the worst of it. If a poor parson marries at all, it ought to be some one who can bake and sew, and trudge about and rough it altogether as he does himself. To marry a fine lady would be simple ruin. Not that she is a fine lady, but she has been petted and cared for all her life. And as the other kind of woman does not attract me, I had better make up my mind to stay as I am.'

'Ah! and you don't like to trust yourself to stay in her neighbourhood, with the chance of seeing her every month or two, and feeling obliged to make yourself out as bearish as possible, for fear she might take a fancy to you.

Men are funny things, truly,' said his cousin.

'What are you talking about?'

'I thought that was it. Poor Ben! But I don't see why you should give it up as a hopeless case. I have no objection to your marrying Pauline. On the contrary, I should rather like it.'

'Thank you,' said Ben, frowning, and looking on the ground. 'But that does not make much difference, I'm afraid.'

Miss Mowbray lifted her eyebrows. 'Doesn't it?' she said, with a little laugh. 'Then what are the obstacles? Why shouldn't you? Do you think she would say no? You are too modest; you have too little confidence in yourself.'

'Well,' said Ben, 'when one looks at it reasonably, it does not seem clear that she would refuse one. She may be ambitious, I don't know; but it is a large family, and her father and I are good friends. I think I could make her as comfortable as she is at home. She would be well looked after, but I should give up everything I have lived for hitherto. You can't give your whole heart to two things at once. There is nothing truer than that.'

Miss Mowbray nodded and smiled. 'I withdraw my accusation,' she said. 'I see you have some confidence in yourself. But I want to talk to you seriously. As I know your very best secret, we may as well be quite candid with each other. Do you think people are ever mistaken in what they call their duty?'

'Not often, if they are honest,' said Ben.

'Don't you think that circumstances may alter, and duties with them? If you owned this property, for instance, would you think it right to go off and work at Forest Moor, and spend all

your money on the people there? Wouldn't you consider that Croome had some claims upon you? Now suppose I was to die to-morrow, and that everything was left to you—what would you do?

'Is that a fair question?' said Ben, with a grim smile. 'I might spoil my prospects by the answer.'

'Don't joke, now. I wish to be serious.'

'You will allow that a man has a perfect right to do as he likes with his own.'

'Yes; but a man's right is not always his duty. You talk so much about duty. What would it be in that case?'

'To begin with, I hope you will do no such thing,' said Ben. 'Parson and squire in one seems to me a hopeless muddle. I have no love for the place because my ancestors lived in it, rather the contrary. I should build new schools, get a Board established, drain some of the low meadows, and then go away. I should feel that I had done my duty by the place, if I let or sold it to a good man. I should present some honest fellow to the living, and then wash my hands of the whole affair.'

Miss Mowbray gazed at her cousin, half in surprise, half in amusement.

'You have no wish to be a rich man, then?' she said, after a minute or two.

'Yes. I should like well enough to have money,' answered Ben. 'But not hung round my neck in the shape of land.'

'How tiresome you are! I shall leave it to Pauline, and tie it up so that you can't get at it for your philanthropic craze.'

'Yes, leave it to her, and then it will be out of my way altogether. Not that we have either of us any right to it.'

'Nobody has. Yours is the best, because you have the old name, though you don't value that as you ought.'

'No, I don't, except for one reason. I must go now,' said Ben, getting up from his comfortable chair. 'We have had rather an odd sort of talk, it seems to me.'

He gave himself a slight stretch and shake, like a dog roused up. He had been sitting in the same attitude all the time, while Miss Mowbray, who was never still for more than three minutes, moved from place to place about the room.

'Yes, rather odd,' said she, 'and one I am not likely to forget. No one ever threatened me with selling Croome Court before.'

Ben smiled. 'If you are looking out for some one to leave it to, why don't you choose George Mowbray? He is very fond of the place. It would be fairer, on the whole, than leaving it to one of his children—a girl, too, who might marry anybody.'

'No. I have my reasons for not doing that. Dear George is something of a fool, and his wife is a worldly woman.'

'You are hard on them, I think. Good-bye.'

'Don't go yet,' said Miss Mowbray. 'I had a letter this morning, which you may read, if you like.'

The letter was from Mrs. Mowbray, and dated from Tourlyon.

'What, they are with all those French people still?' said Ben.

'Yes; they will come back quite foreign.'

Mrs. Mowbray never told aunt Lucia anything that she thought would displease her, but a letter from Tourlyon could not help being full of Gérard de Maulévrier, and the approaching visit to his château. Pauline's mother could only say of her that she was per-

fectly happy, and felt as if she was living in a story-book. Mrs. Mowbray herself would not be very sorry to see England again. She supposed that, on leaving Maulévrier, they would extend their tour, and visit some more towns, so that they were not likely to be back for a month or so.

This letter gave the Rector something to think about. He walked away from the Court more slowly than usual, lost, as it were, in a wood of châteaux and marquises. He crossed the bridge by the mill, and followed the footpath across low green meadows, along by the hedge of thickly-waving cornfields, gradually climbing the hill. The church stood on a high ledge of ground at the head of a wild rocky valley. Its white spire was backed up by a fir-wood, beyond which was the rectory, a pretty gabled house in a garden. The house was covered with clematis and roses. It had a large shady porch, and the rooms in it, though very plainly furnished, were as civilised as if their owner had been a man of artistic taste, instead of a plain rough fellow like Ben Dunstan.

CHAPTER XL

THROUGH THE FOREST.

FRANÇOISE DE BRYE need not have been anxious about the keeping of her secret, for Pauline, after all, did not even find strength to tell her mother. It would have been hardly possible to do so without betraying a feeling that now filled her with pain and shame. This happy spoiled child, used only to the summer days of life, loved, admired, and considered first by all her own people, had never imagined the possibility of such a self-deception as this. She was too generous to blame Gérard ;

besides, on second thoughts, she told herself plainly that only a fanciful idiot could have misunderstood him. How could she so easily have forgotten the difference in mind and manners between him and her countrymen ? The idea of fancying that a Frenchman was in love with one, because he was charmingly polite and a little sentimental ! Pauline laughed at herself, and felt very hard and cool about it ; yet her heart was dreadfully sore, and she could not trust herself to tell her mother of the engagement.

She lay awake that night full of self-reproach and self-pity ; this would push in, in spite of the sternest resolutions. It was very sad, the finding out suddenly that one was a stranger in this land, and must not expect to have any real interest here. Only a passing spectator, a mere tourist, foolish enough to lose her heart where nobody cared to find it. Her eyes were hot and dim with tears. Presently, in a sudden fit of home-sickness, she got up, and began a letter to aunt Lucia in England, full of longings to be back again. Aunt Lucia might often be very provoking ; but Pauline knew that she loved her, and those visits to Croome Court, which the young Mowbrays were accustomed to call ' duty visits,' seemed now to this desolate exile times of perfect safety and repose. Aunt Lucia had not approved of the tour, except for one reason—that it would teach Pauline to value her own country. The Rector, who had walked in just then, and who always took advantage of his position to say tiresome things, had agreed with her, adding some ignorant jokes about Frenchmen and frogs. Pauline had thought them both very stupid and disagreeable. But now she forgave aunt Lucia, who,

after all, knew something of the world, and reminded herself of the Rector's goodness, not to say heroism. He was not ornamental, certainly; but there was no deception in him.

With this kind thought of her English admirer, who would have been thankful to know it, Pauline found herself getting very sleepy, and thought she had better perhaps leave the letter to be finished another time. Kind Nature, which was given to blessing Pauline, sent her to sleep as soon as her fair head touched the pillow.

When she awoke, Mrs. Mowbray was standing dressed by her side; the sun was shining, the church-bells were ringing; all the gay morning noises of Tourlyon were going on in the streets. Mrs. Mowbray kissed her child, who woke smiling, but almost immediately sighed and said, 'After all, mother, I wish we were going home to-day instead of to Maulévrier.'

'Why? are you a little homesick?' said Mrs. Mowbray cheerfully. 'I know the feeling too; but it will be great fun, and we shall have so much to talk about afterwards.'

'Yes,' said Pauline, and she did not go on to any explanations.

Of course one could not change one's plans now without some tolerable reason. Everything was just the same, except her own silly feelings, which must be hidden from everybody; and she was thankful for the French girl's confidence, which had waked her in time from a dangerous, foolish dream. In the light of morning she felt braver and less morbid. She read over the half-written letter to aunt Lucia, smiled, and tore it up, wondering a little at her own childishness.

Madame de Maulévrier's large carriage received them all—the Marquis and his three English friends, now become his guests. They drove away into the country, first along a straight smooth road bordered by lines of tall poplars, beyond which were green meadows and apple orchards. The road grew wilder as they went on, climbing out of the valley of the Yonne. For some time they kept along the side of a steep slope, the descent from the forest lands into the plain. Above them lay a broad belt of stony ground and heather, with goats climbing about, watched by gipsy-looking children, and here and there a patch of vineyard fenced with turf and stones. Below, on the other side of the broad even road that skirted the hill, long green slopes, varied with trees, with a small field of corn or colza, a farmhouse, or a group of dirty picturesque cottages, ran down into the low ground. The road itself was bordered on this lower side by great Spanish chestnut-trees, whose stately growth and beautiful shining leaves gave the whole foreground a look of dignity. Between and over them one caught glimpses of the plain, with here and there a sparkle of water, with white church-spires and the soaring roofs of châteaux, and blue hills far away. Tourlyon was left behind farther down the valley; but by looking back one could still catch sight of its crowding towers, faint and gray against the misty horizon.

Further on they drove through miles of pine forest, where the road was soft and heavy, where the sun gleamed through the red stems, and the wind above sighed and rushed gently, like a summer sea. Then other woods, chiefly of oak and delicate silver birch, all made glorious by the tall wav-

ing plumes of golden broom that grew high up among the trees, and then fell in bright showers across the dark background. Among the fir-woods there were strange sandy places, where the road cut through yellow rocks all tufted with fern and blooming purple heather. It was all wild, luxuriant, and lonely; cheerful enough on a sunny afternoon like this, but full of suggestions of dreariness.

As they drove deeper into these forests, where the only sound of human life was the jingle of their harness-bells, Gérard talked a good deal and told them stories. They all listened eagerly, Mr. Mowbray and Pauline quite carried away by these romantic scenes and their histories. Mrs. Mowbray, though by no means a nervous woman, was almost alarmed at finding herself, as it seemed, getting farther and farther away from the common round of civilised life. As Gérard described wolf and boar hunts in these very woods, her eyes wandered anxiously down into the green glades beside the road. That corner by the sandy rocks had been a famous haunt of robbers years ago. The heavy coaches of the time were generally upset there, the ruts were so deep, and this gave the 'larrons' their opportunity. It was nearly a hundred years ago; but this spot was still supposed by the peasants to be haunted by a well-known highwayman.

'In the great Revolution,' said Gérard, 'M. de Brye's grandfather was obliged to fly from the mob and hide himself in these woods. He found a little cave in those rocks, and managed to live there for some days; but at last they found him and dragged him back to the *Maison Blanche*. They had a grand idea, to make him

set his house on fire with his own hands. He did it, too.'

'What became of him afterwards?' said Mr. Mowbray.

'They let him go, and he escaped to Germany. I think I would rather have died.'

Then Mr. Mowbray asked something about the Germans in the late war.

'They did not venture into these forests,' said Gérard, looking gloomily down.

Pauline wished her father had not alluded to the war.

At last the road became less wild and solitary; there was a break in the woods; vineyards and cornfields began to appear again on the sunny slopes. But it was still a forest country. Then the horses stopped at a high point of the road, where a stone crucifix stood on three mossy steps, its foot heaped with votive wreaths of beads, and faded leaves and flowers. Gérard stood up in the carriage, and offered his hand to Pauline.

'If these ladies will stand up for a moment,' he said, smiling, 'they will see *Maulévrier*.'

'What, already!' said Mr. Mowbray.

Pauline stood up, her heart beating strangely, and looked past the crucifix, across the waves of varied green to where those ridges of steep gray roof were shining in the sun. She thought, even at this distance, that Gérard's home was worthy of him, but she was troubled by her own agitation, and said nothing. It did not seem necessary, for her father and mother were eager in their admiration. Gérard looked at her a little curiously; it perhaps struck him that the charming English girl had lost some of her frank enthusiasm. She felt that he was looking, but did not turn her eyes that way. He was disappointed,

but Pauline would not see it. She stood gazing across the wooded valley, finding out by degrees the church-spire, the roofs of houses just showing down below, the poplars in the village street.

'Your house is quite regal,' said Mr. Mowbray, turning to Gérard. 'Of course you are Legitimist: a man could not live in a place like that and be anything else. It is ancien régime all over. You have oubliettes, no doubt. Do you put your peasants into them?'

'The peasants are not mine, do you see, monsieur,' said Gérard. 'Madame, why does Monsieur Mowbray refuse to believe that we Legitimists are civilised, and love the people?'

'I cannot tell. Because he is very stupid and very prejudiced,' said Mrs. Mowbray, smiling, as she sat down. 'But really I feel as if I was going to stay in a feudal castle. I had no idea your situation was so stately and beautiful, and such a very long way from everywhere.'

'Isn't it refreshing?' said her husband. 'No railway, no telegraph—no post, I was almost going to say.'

'O, you are quite mistaken; we are within three leagues of a railway. Go on,' said M. de Maulévrier to the coachman; and they started off at full swing down the hill.

Madame de Maulévrier and her second son had never suited each other very well. Victor was a man of the world, the modern world which his mother hated. As a boy, he had rebelled against the strict life of the château, and had tried unsuccessfully to make Gérard rebel too. To do him justice, however, he had never shown any jealousy of Gérard, and since he had grown up and entered the army his mother had had no fault

to find with him. In his visits to Maulévrier he conformed quietly to all her rules, and she did not trouble herself as to what he thought of them. She had the outward respect and obedience which every French son pays to his mother, and this was enough from Victor, though it would have been sadly too little from Gérard. She and Victor were, in reality, strangers to each other, and never likely to become anything else.

Victor had looked forward with some dismay to the two days of clockwork existence that would have to be passed at Maulévrier before Gérard and his friends arrived. Life alone with his mother was a serious thing. He could only smoke by stealth. 'Triboulet' and his kind were interdicted; the lightest reading was the *Figaro*. Cards must not be even mentioned, nor dancing, nor acting; politics must only be talked within certain limits. Every kind of modern art, in books, painting, music, was hateful to the Marquise. The breath of scandal was never heard in her house; nothing light or weak of any kind was to be found there. Victor often wondered how his brother Gérard could have grown up so freely in this narrow place, with wide sympathies and a refined education. He did not do justice to the clearness and purity of such an air as this, sweet and bracing in its sharp thinness to those souls who can breathe in it at all. Like the dwellers on mountain-tops, they are melancholy; but like them, too, they can look up straight into the blue sky, without any clouds of smoke between.

After all, Victor's two days alone with his mother passed off fairly well. He thought she was more indulgent than she used to be; at any rate, he did not feel

himself so much criticised and disapproved of. But afterwards he thought that this was mere indifference, her mind being occupied with other things. Gérard had been quite right in proposing to bring the Mowbrays to Maulévrier. She liked to think of his having made friends with a man who had known and respected his father, and she had many things in her mind to say to Mr. Mowbray—recollections of her husband, which she thought he would care to hear; questions to ask about him. She also wished in her heart to reward Gérard for his dutiful behaviour about Mademoiselle de Bbye.

Victor found no difficulty this time in making conversation for his mother. Gérard's doings at Tourlyon, the family of Bbye, their ways and their plans, were subjects of endless interest. Victor did his duty thoroughly; he spoke with esteem of Monsieur and Madame de Bbye, with admiration of Françoise. Madame de Maulévrier listened a little doubtfully, though she was pleased. Victor had spoken strongly, for him, and had apparently given her some reason for thought. As they sat in the salon after breakfast, on the day that Gérard and his friends were expected, she at her usual needlework, he turning over the *Union* and thinking of a cigar, she said suddenly and rather sternly, 'Mademoiselle de Bbye has a character, then?'

'Certainly, ma mère, and a very decided one,' said Victor, looking at her gravely.

'I suppose it is best so!'

'Can there be any doubt about it?'

'Yes, a great deal,' said Madame de Maulévrier. 'It may often be a mistake for a young girl to have a character. All that ought to arrange itself after she is married.

Mademoiselle de Bbye's character, for instance, might not suit Gérard's. He has one, you know.'

'Without doubt. But Mademoiselle Fanni is so well brought up that I think you need not fear.'

'What did you call her?' said the Marquise sharply.

'Fanni, the old name I knew when we were children.'

'I do not like those baby names,' said the Marquise: 'you are not children any more, and they are better forgotten.'

'It is true,' said Victor.

His tone was a little sad, but Madame de Maulévrier did not notice it; she was not thinking of him. Neither of them spoke for two or three minutes. It was one of those silences that Victor often declared to exist nowhere but at Maulévrier. The old clock ticked slowly, but though it was in the middle of the day, all the house was profoundly still, and not a sound came in at the open windows.

'Have you read Bismarck's last speech, ma mère?' said Victor at last, returning to his newspaper.

'Merci! I prefer to ignore his existence,' replied Madame de Maulévrier.

Victor smiled a little grimly, and wondered how soon he would be able to escape.

'What sort of person is the daughter of this Englishman?' asked his mother.

'Well, Gérard thinks her beautiful, and she certainly is a fine young woman. She is tall, like her mother, fair, blue eyes, an English beauty. A style that I do not admire so much as Gérard does.'

His mother raised her eyes from her tapestry, and fixed them upon him.

'Can I trust you, Victor?' she said.

He gazed at her in astonishment. Her face was as hard as ever; there was no affection in it

for him; her rare smiles and softenings were kept for Gérard, as her confidences had always been.

'Trust me! certainly; you know it,' he answered quietly.

'It is about Gérard,' she went on, in a lowered voice. 'Since he went to Tourlyon I have discovered something; it was in the blotting-book on the table in his room. I only ask you because I cannot ask him. It seemed to explain things that he had said to me; and if you could reassure me—'

Victor's whole attention was bent upon her; in his dark steady eyes there was a reflection of her own natural sternness, and for some reason she felt herself hesitating and changing colour.

'In plain words,' she said, 'Gérard is in love with somebody. Who is it? Tell me. You are his brother, and likely to know; young men tell their secrets to each other. You can trust me as I trust you.'

'Yes, I am your son,' said Victor.

It sounded a little theatrical. If he meant to touch her heart for himself, he quite failed, for she was only thinking of Gérard.

'How did you discover it?' he said. 'What did Gérard say to you? I do not quite understand.'

'It was a paper of verses; a farewell to somebody,' said Madame de Maulévrier. 'What did he say? Why, he pretended he did not wish to marry. But it cannot have been any one possible, or he would have told me her name.'

'An imaginary woman, probably,' said Victor. 'Poetical fellows like Gérard are always doing that sort of thing.'

'Why cannot you be frank with me—tell me the truth!' exclaimed Madame de Maulévrier. 'Imaginary—absurd! He hoped to meet her in paradise. You

think he would not wish me to know. He has made you swear not to tell me, perhaps? Your mother is an unhappy creature among you all.'

'My mother, do not vex yourself in this way,' said Victor gently. 'I never heard of this lady, and even now I can hardly believe in her existence. Anyhow, Gérard is quite resigned. You would have been satisfied if you had seen him at Tourlyon. These poets always have ideals out of reach. They have two lives, do you see? It is the way with them all.'

'It is a very stupid way,' said Madame de Maulévrier. 'But you don't convince me in the least. When Gérard left home a fortnight ago he was in love with somebody. He can hardly have forgotten her yet.'

'He has, if she existed a thousand times over,' said Victor. 'When a man leads a hermit life, like our excellent Gérard, and then goes out into the world, he is certain to lose his heart over and over again. It has been a struggle all this time between his duty to Mademoiselle de Brye—she attracts him too, I can tell you—and his admiration of Mademoiselle Mowbray.'

Victor thought it was only prudent to say this, to prepare his mother for what he himself thought probable—Gérard's complete enslaving by the blue-eyed English girl. Madame de Maulévrier smiled rather scornfully.

'Gérard is not quite so weak as you suppose,' she said. 'Now, there can be no struggle; he is engaged. And is it only the hermits who lose their hearts, my poor Victor?'

'We in the crowd are more prudent,' said Victor. 'Besides, most of us are poor fellows whose hearts nobody cares for.'

This, too, was lost on his mother.

'Come with me to Gérard's room,' she said, 'and I will show you what I meant. Only never tell him you have seen it. Do you understand?'

Victor got up; but he stood still, and looked at his mother.

'If you will pardon me,' he said, 'I would rather not see it. I am sure Gérard has neither done nor thought anything that need grieve you.'

Madame de Maulévrier stared, flushing faintly. Victor saw that she was thinking of him at last; but she said nothing. Perhaps she was angry; but he thought not.

'You know Gérard, *ma mère*, and so do I,' he went on. 'We have the same opinion of him. Now, if you will allow me, I am going out for a little walk.'

She stood passively, and let him kiss her hand.

'Very well, *mon fils*,' she said, after a moment. 'You will be here to receive them.'

'Certainly,' said Victor; and he strolled away somewhat thoughtfully into the park with his cigar.

CHAPTER XII.

A LEGITIMIST HOUSE.

THE shadows were lengthening as Gérard and his friends drove through the village street. The vivid depth and clearness of the light gave a strange intense reality to everything—a look that in misty England one reads of and imagines, but never sees. People lifted up their worn intelligent faces as the carriage passed, some looking grave and weary, others smiling. The broadest smiles were on the face of a fat old woman who was stocking her

kitchen with brown loaves a yard long, which a moustached baker in a blouse was unloading from his cart at her door. A little farther on, the Curé was standing at his gate. Gérard's face brightened as he saw his old friend, every line of whose face was full of welcome.

'It is my dear old tutor,' he explained to his companions; and then a minute later they turned out of the street into the avenue of limes.

'Here you are at my home, *mademoiselle*,' said Gérard, bending forward to Pauline, with a look and smile that reminded her of their talk in the street that day.

She was obliged to respond; she smiled too, a little glad that her father's exclamations on the splendid old trees saved her the trouble of speaking.

A few minutes more, and they were at the château that she had been thinking and dreaming about all these days. It was, indeed, a wild old place to English eyes, deserted, neglected, overgrown with moss and weeds. Poor Mrs. Mowbray, who was not romantic, and liked civilisation, looked round with a slight shiver as she got out of the carriage.

The great rusty gates were open, and Madame de Maulévrier was standing with her son Victor on the steps. Gérard sprang out, kissed his mother, and presented his friends, to whom she made low curtsies. The stateliness of her manner struck them at once; it was quite distinct from Madame de Brye's stiffness. The little Marquise, with her pale straight face, was dressed in a plain gown of some thin stuff, and a round black straw hat. There was something very impressive about her; she gave one the idea of perfect

sincerity. The few words she said were cordial, and she evidently meant them. Pauline felt at once that she admired Madame de Maulévrier very much, far more than any French lady she had seen. Mr. Mowbray was at home with her at once. His wife could not quite make up her mind. As they went into the hall, Gérard turned to Pauline again with his half-wistful look.

'You are very welcome to Maulévrier,' he said. 'If the world was a different place, one might be happy.'

'One is happy,' Pauline answered; and then she saw that Madame de Maulévrier's eyes were fixed upon her.

'You like France, mademoiselle?' she said, in a voice which was musical enough, though it had a harsh note in it sometimes.

'Yes, madame,' Pauline answered quietly.

Then another inhabitant of Maulévrier—a great rough sad-faced deerhound—after caressing his master, came and poked his long nose under her hand. She lingered a moment in the hall, talking to him, while he gazed up into her face, and Gérard stood looking on.

The great hall was paved with stone; a stone staircase, broad and easy, with heavy iron balusters, went up on one side; opposite was a high open door leading into another hall. That was the garden side of the house. The long windows there were open on the garden terrace, and looked out upon trees bathed in sunlight. The light shone through the house from end to end, giving it a noble cheerfulness. The old uneven painted walls were hung with pictures, chiefly portraits of old Maulévriers. There were a few old chairs and tables in these

halls, a great inlaid cabinet, a stand of arms, and an immense stuffed wolf grinning horribly in a corner. Not much look of comfort; but still Pauline, as she stood there with her hand on the dog's head, knew that she loved Maulévrier, and could have lived and died there, if Fate had chosen to arrange it so. She also understood that little French girl's shrinking from a place like this. It had such a strong character of its own that the people who lived there must absolutely adapt themselves to it. It must be loved or hated with all one's heart, like a stern human being. One might be in entire harmony with it, or in hopeless discord; and the last need not be altogether one's own fault.

They went into the inner hall, and through an anteroom into the large salon, which looked out on the garden side of the house. These rooms seemed bare and cold. The walls and ceiling were carved and painted gray, with running wreaths of flowers in pale colours. The great chimneypiece was carved and blazoned with coats-of-arms. The chairs were chiefly white and gold, their cushions of faded brocade; but there was a mixture of large tapestried fauteuils, and one or two still more cumbersome, covered with old yellow satin. The floor looked like a sheet of ice. As to books, they were only represented by a few pamphlets and newspapers lying on a small table. On the narrow shelf of the chimneypiece there were three photographs in velvet frames—Henri Cinq, Don Carlos, and Princess Marguerite. The whole thing was a contrast to Madame de Brye's drawing-room, so full of comfort and pretty things; but it gave one the idea of a family holding fast, in poverty and misfortune, to its old tradi-

tions, refusing to believe that the world had changed and left all those things behind.

It was hopelessly sad, and yet there was a strange beauty about it. Pauline began to understand why the Marquis de Maulévrier should have grown up melancholy.

The whole house had the same effect of last-century greatness, swept out by revolutions. The long unfurnished corridors, paved with red tiles; the bedrooms, with their old furniture of various styles, and hangings of patched tapestry; and then, through the windows, that glorious wooded view in the glow of evening—Mr. Mowbray told his wife he had never been in such an inspiring place. He was almost wild with delight. Mrs. Mowbray thought it all very strange and interesting, and confessed that she liked Madame de Maulévrier.

'But always remember you are in France, darling,' she said to Pauline, who had come into her room before going down to dinner, and was standing rather dreamily at the window.

'Am I likely to forget it, mother?' she said, turning round. 'We could not well be farther from England. Didn't it give you a sort of thrill to hear Madame de Maulévrier talk so naturally of "our king"? One seemed to have gone back suddenly a hundred years.'

'Yes, poor things!' said Mrs. Mowbray. 'I think it is almost a pity to waste so much good feeling. There, don't argue with me. You are a furious Royalist now, of course. But when I said you must remember you are in France, I was not thinking of politics. About them I rather agree with M. de Brye's dog. I am afraid it will be dull for you, with no one to speak to but

Madame de Maulévrier and me. French girls do lead very stupid lives, no doubt. You must never go out without me, you know, Pauline.'

'Not with papa?' said Pauline.

'Well, not on any of these wild expeditions that M. de Maulévrier was talking about. I think you ought to stay with me as much as possible, dearest child.'

'M. de Maulévrier won't ask me to go, if he thinks I ought not.'

'We will always consult his mother, at any rate,' said Mrs. Mowbray.

Pauline was a little vexed; she thought her father was always chaperon enough, no matter how many young Frenchmen might be of the party. The Comte had never shown her anything but the barest politeness, and as to the Marquis, he was himself—her friend, as she called him silently. Nothing could alter the truth that they understood each other, he and she.

'And why not?' Pauline asked herself, in a fierce young impatience of she hardly knew what, of the world's opinion and suspicions. 'Have two people like us never been friends before?'

Mr. Mowbray had already gone down-stairs; his wife was not quite ready, but Gérard had warned them of his mother's passion for punctuality, so Mrs. Mowbray told Pauline to go on, and she would follow her directly. Pauline walked down the red arched corridor slowly, in her white gown. She felt sad and uneasy, with all her fine theories of friendship. Half-way down she turned into the deep recess of a large window, to look at one or two portraits which were hanging there, especially one, small and faded, of a young man with dark eyes, in an old-fashioned uniform. It was

easy to see that Gérard was not a new type in his family. A quick step on the tiles startled her; she turned round, and saw him coming along the passage. He stood still and looked at her, smiling.

'It makes me very happy to see you standing there, mademoiselle!'

'I am afraid I am curious,' said Pauline, 'but I am so fond of pictures—and I could not help stopping to look at these. I suppose that is a relation of yours?'

'Yes, and a namesake. That poor fellow lived here in the time of the Revolution. Our misfortunes began with him, and have gone on ever since. It is a pity we don't banish the name.'

'But you are not so unfortunate as some people. You have your old place still—and how very beautiful it is!' said Pauline.

'Poor old place!' said Gérard. 'It is beautiful at this moment, certainly. I have so much to show you, and that dear Monsieur Mowbray. How happy you are, mademoiselle, to have such a charming father!'

'Yes, papa is everything that is dear and good,' said Pauline.

'And Madame Mowbray too! I look on with envy, and feel myself outside in the cold. I have no friends like that, except my old tutor. I must introduce him to you. And, mademoiselle, may I ask you to forgive me one thing?'

'I do not know what it can be, monsieur,' said Pauline.

This was an odd way of talking, but how could he be expected to talk like a commonplace man? thought this friend of the Marquis.

'Forgive me if I speak to you as an Englishman would.'

'O, certainly.'

'You don't misunderstand me? You know how it is with us? Our young girls are kept under lock

and key by their good mothers, and one cannot have any talk with them but the smallest, do you see? But I knew at once, when I saw you, how you had been brought up: you are to me like Dante's Beatrice—I could not talk in that small way to you. I cannot look at you without wishing to tell you all my thoughts—not that they are worth your knowing.'

Pauline listened, and thanked the kind angel who had advised Mademoiselle de Brye to confide in her. What silly things she might have fancied from such a speech as this! As it was, thank heaven, she perfectly understood Gérard. He was a poet, and unhappy; she might do him some good, and most certainly he was welcome to all her sympathy. But she could not let him overrate her so much.

'I do assure you,' she said, 'that I am not the least like Beatrice or any one so great. I am not at all clever, and know very little of the world. When you talk to me, you will find me much stupider than you think. Papa knows it. I am not the least original, unfortunately.'

'Gérard! Not dressed yet!' cried a voice from the other end of the corridor.

'In a moment, mother,' Gérard answered, with life and cheerfulness in his voice.

He did not speak again to Pauline, but left her with an eager look of gratitude, and something more than admiration. She felt strangely lifted up, as if she was going through some high and new experience. Gérard's enthusiasm found only too ready a response. Something, half pleasure, half pain so deep that she hardly dared to realise it, was burning in her cheeks and shining in her deep blue eyes as she

walked down the corridor. There, at the top of the stairs, she met Madame de Maulévrier, who had watched the English girl coming towards her, tall and graceful in her white dress, and had repeated to herself that this young woman was both beautiful and good. The Marquise had a very clear judgment of people, and an undoubted confidence in it. She waited for Pauline at the top of the stairs, asked whether her mother was tired after the long drive, and then took her hand to lead her down-stairs. When they reached the salon, Pauline almost thought that Gérard's stern little mother had something of his nameless charm.

To the three English guests, this old-fashioned household, with its simple ways, was an immense relief from the *Maison Brye*. People there thought themselves so much more agreeable, and were so much more tiresome. Here the dinner was almost brilliant. Madame de Maulévrier evidently liked the strangers. She and Mr. Mowbray had a great deal to say to each other, while Pauline and her mother found themselves laughing and talking with the two young men. Gérard that

evening, in the character of host, looked wonderfully handsome and was quite a sociable being. Victor also did his best. Pauline thought the dining-room beautiful; its walls and ceiling were dark red, with remains of painting, and, in the revived old fashion, china plates were hung round in groups. Gérard had done that himself one day, he told them.

Late that night, when the dream-like evening was over, Pauline opened her shutters and leaned out into the sea of moonlight. The wild hoot of an owl startled her, then another, and another, as they flew restlessly from tree to tree. The frogs down in the park joined in with their harsh chorus. It seemed a strange weird thing to hear such sounds at night, but at Maulévrier everything was strange. Pauline hid her hot cheeks in her hands as she leaned over her iron bar. Would she ever bitterly repent having come here at all? Would it not have been better to have no interests but at home in England, to walk quietly in the paths that good friends had marked out for her?

'No, no, this is better!' the foolish girl said to herself.

(To be continued.)

DR. AND MRS. MORTON.

Dr. and Mrs. Morton had finished tiffin, and were discussing some private theatricals, which, followed by a ball, were to take place that evening at the mess-house of the —th. The subject was a delicate one, for on it they held decided, but unfortunately divided, opinions. The doctor had a prejudice against such things, and, though in most respects very indulgent to his pretty little wife, objected to her attending them. She, however, was bent on doing so.

‘You know, dear, that it is the very last of the season, and every one will be there.’

‘And you know my rooted objection to these entertainments, Ada; why do you urge me?’

‘Then when shall I ever have an opportunity of showing off that lovely pink and silver cloak you got from Madras on my birthday?’ pouted the young wife.

‘Ah, that is a deeply important matter!’ laughed the doctor. ‘We must see if we can’t get up a dance in our own bungalow, little woman,’ continued he somewhat inconsequently.

‘But that won’t be a ball and theatricals to-night; and by that time Daddahbhoj, Rumanagee, and the other Parsees will have their shops filled with the new-fashioned cloak, while as yet mine is the only one in the cantonment. I really do think, William, that you might let me go. I am sure I sit patiently enough through those solemn dinners and scientific *réunions* of which you are so fond.’

‘Well, well, as it is the very last of the season, I suppose I must be amiable for once; but—’

‘O, that’s a dear good disagreeable old thing!’ said his wife, giving him a kiss; and, without waiting to hear more, in a flutter of delight she left the room.

When left to himself the doctor pondered their late conversation, and felt by no means satisfied with his share in it. Still, having consented, he determined to do so with a good grace; and, on Mrs. Morton presently reëntering to look for something, he said, ‘By the way, dear, when shall I order the palanquin for you?’

Still continuing her search, she replied rather absently, ‘O, any time. I shall only want it returning; the Hills will call for me going.’

Dr. Morton was taken aback.

‘So,’ he exclaimed, ‘you had arranged to go with—or without—my consent!’

With a little start, she answered somewhat confusedly, ‘Well, I thought you would be sure to give me leave, William, and—’

‘As you have chosen to act so wholly independently,’ interrupted her husband angrily, ‘I withdraw the consent I unwittingly gave. The house shall be closed at the usual hour, and if you do not happen to be at home at eleven o’clock, *we do not sleep under the same roof this night.*’ And in high displeasure Dr. Morton left the house; nor did he return for a couple of hours, during which his mood had more than once changed. The first irritation over,

he felt that it was hard upon his pet to deny her the pleasure to which but the moment before he had assented. How could he bear to spend the long evening opposite that disappointed wistful little face? It began, too, to dawn upon him that 'the whole cantonment'—which, in India, where private life is more distinctly public property than in any other corner of the world, stands for our esteemed old friend Mrs. Grundy—might, as has ever been its wont, put an unkind construction on motives it did not understand; might hint that he was not so much standing by his principles—which, in fact, he had yielded—as avenging his own offended dignity. The result of all which cogitation was that if, on his return home, he should find that she had accepted both disappointment and rebuke in a proper spirit—much, indeed all, depended on that—she should go with their friends to the ball; or even, in the very probable event of their having already called, he would show his magnanimity by taking her himself. Just then a carriage drove swiftly past his; he recognised it to be the Hills', and in it—could he credit his senses?—all radiant with smiles, wrapped in her new cloak, sat his wife, who, in merry defiance, kissed her hands to him as they passed.

Both ball and theatricals were delightful, and none enjoyed them more than the volatile and fascinating Mrs. Morton. In the gaiety of her spirits she confided to one after another of her dearest friends her husband's threat; and to one or two who expressed some fear that he might carry it out she laughingly replied that she did not think that that would be at all likely; but in the event of anything so improbable, she had still

her palanquin, in which she could rest till gun-fire, when, of course, the house would be opened.

I am told that nowadays palanquins are in as little request in India as sedan-chairs in England; but in Dr. and Mrs. Morton's time—for know, O reader, that my story is founded on fact—they were, except in the evening drive, the most general mode of carriage. In the verandah of every house one or more might always be seen, with their bearers at hand, ready for instant service by day or by night.

It was past two o'clock when Dr. Morton heard, coming down the compound, the moaning monotonous cry of the bearers who carried their mistress to her home. Placing the palanquin in the verandah, they called loudly for admission, striking the door with their hands, in no small wonder that it had not, as usual, been thrown wide at their approach. Expectation of the coming triumph had driven sleep from his pillow; and he now turned his head with a grim smile, for his revenge was at hand—the little rebel should learn a lesson never to be forgotten.

To the bearers' voices was soon added that of their mistress's; indignantly, entreatingly, coaxingly she called in turn. She reminded her husband that their verandah was overlooked from the road. 'Let me in, I beg, I entreat of you, William. It will be gun-fire in a couple of hours, and if seen here I shall be the laughing-stock of the whole station. O William dear, do let me in!'

To which her husband answered sternly, 'We shall not rest under the same roof this night;' and he chuckled to himself, for he only intended to keep her waiting a few minutes.

For a moment Mrs. Morton seemed irresolute; then, having said a few words to the head-bearer, she cried aloud in a passionate burst of sobs, 'I will die sooner than submit to such humiliation;' and, followed by her servants, she rushed away.

There was a long wailing cry—a shriek—a heavy splash. Good Heavens! could it be—could it be possible that his impetuous wife had thrown herself into the well? Hark to those wild cries, as the bearers run hither and thither with loud exclamations and calls for help. Paralysed with fear, the husband could with difficulty open the door; then, rushing out, he would have flung himself into the still rippling water, in a mad attempt at rescue, had not a bearer hung upon his arm, as, in broken English, he tried to explain that his mistress was safe.

'Then where is she? What is all this row about? Who has fallen in? What are you all yelling for?'

'For Mem Sahib tell, "Throw big stone down well;" then too much bobbery make; run this way, that way—plenty great tamashâ. Mem Sahib make big cry, then Mem run away.'

Dr. Morton knew himself outwitted, for doubtless his wife had taken advantage of the door she had thus succeeded in opening. Ah, well, though vexed at the trick, he was by no means sorry that the conflict was at an end, and that they should both pass what remained of the night in peaceful rest. He dismissed the bearers, and returned to the house, but to find it shut! The door was closed, and obstinately resisted all efforts to open it; while a voice from the window at which he had himself so lately spoken said, 'We shall not sleep

under the same roof this night.' The doctor, with an uneasy laugh, first treated the situation as a silly joke, then expostulated, then stormed; but all without avail or even notice. He called to the ayah to open the door; but her answer was that she was locked in Mem's room, and Mem had the key under her pillow. He stamped at first with anger, but soon with cold, for his night pyjamas offered slight protection against the chill morning air. At length, seeing the palanquin, he got into it. The lovely cloak was lying on the cushions; he drew the hood over his head, its delicate hues in striking contrast to his sunburnt face and dishevelled hair, and, dragging it round his broad shoulders with an angry tug, settled himself to sleep.

The gun had fired, the 'assembly' sounded, but still the doctor slept on. Nor was he roused by the sound of horses' hoofs, as a bevy of ladies, unescorted except by servants, rode up to the door. They would be joined in their ride by their husbands after parade; and then, after a final round of the course, assemble at the house of one or other of their party to chota-hazarie and a lively discussion of absent friends.

In much surprise they waited a minute or so before the closed and silent house; then, with significant glances, one after the other slid from her saddle, determined to solve the mystery. Ah, there it is! A little corner of the cloak worn the night before by Mrs. Morton peeped out of the closed doors of the palanquin; 'twas evident that the poor little thing had been obliged to seek that shelter. 'What a shame!' They would speak to her, they would comfort her, and O, what a laugh they would have against her! They

grouped themselves round the palanquin, bending low to peer in; and one on either side drew back the sliding doors as—gracious!—Dr. Morton, still half-asleep, slowly opened his eyes. Most effectually was he awakened by the startled exclamation with which the visitors hastily retreated to their horses, which they were just in the act of mounting as the door was thrown open, and Mrs. Morton appeared in her riding-habit. They immediately rode away, to the infinite satisfaction of the recumbent but impatient doctor, who was in mortal fear that fresh complications might arise through his unexplained absence from duty bringing messages of inquiry.

At the meeting of husband and wife we would rather not play fly in the corner, but take for granted that there was the usual amount of tears, recrimination,

and hysterics, in which—for this occasion only—a torn and crumpled fabric of pink and silver took an active part; the sight of it from time to time stimulating Mrs. Morton's grief and eloquence, while her husband, who, smarting under the *exposé* of the morning, had entered on the fray with unusual spirit, soon found himself vanquished, limp, and utterly dismayed, as his own inconsistent, tyrannical, and selfish conduct was contrasted—not for the first time—with the patient endurance of his long-suffering wife.

Neither of this, nor of the reconciliation that followed in natural sequence, shall we make record; but we must of the pleasing fact that, at the very next concert, Mrs. Morton, leaning on her husband's arm, appeared in most excellent spirits, her cloak, this time of amber and gold, being admired by all beholders.

G. NICOLSON.

ACTOR-MANAGERS.

MR. WALTER DONALDSON, who died in 1877, aged eighty-four, used to say that, in the course of his sixty odd years of histrionic experience, he generally found the most successful actor was most unsuccessful as a manager. He regarded this as an unaccountable but indisputable fact, and has so noted it down in his 'Recollections of an Actor.' He held up as his type of a successful manager 'Richard Brinsley Sheridan, not an actor-manager, but one capable of presiding over the drama free from the petty jealousies of a Garrick.' To Sheridan, the author-manager, as he points out, we owed the actor's advance in social position; the introduction of Mrs. Siddons to the stage in her true character, that of a great actress; the discovery of Mrs. Jordan; the establishment in his rightful place of John Kemble, and, after him, of Edmund Kean. On the other hand, he notes the persistent efforts of Garrick to suppress or thrust back into obscurity 'Mossup, Macklin, Mrs. Siddons, and the father of Richard Brinsley Sheridan.' To this list the name of Henderson and other actors might be added.

He also pointed out that the salaries paid by Garrick were kept at their lowest ebb: Reddish, a really great actor, second only to Garrick, received but five pounds a week, and many clever players in Drury Lane under his management were obliged to exist upon the beggarly salary of a pound a week! Sheridan, his successor, paid from four pounds by propor-

tionate advances upward to forty pounds per week.

He again notes, as supporting his view of actor-managers, the fact that directly the two HARRISES retired from the management of Covent Garden, and actors took their places, the quality of its plays and players degenerated, and at length the British drama was ejected as a source of failure, and foreign opera usurped its place. Also he traces the great success of the Dublin Theatre at the beginning of the present century to the management of F. E. JONES, 'a gentleman by birth and education,' who, 'fortunately for the true interests of the drama, did not act himself;' and therefore, adds he, 'merit had its free scope, without that thwarting which is generally the case when the manager is himself an actor.'

On the opposite side stand the stories extant of Sheridan's jealousy of contemporary dramatists, particularly CUMBERLAND, and the tolerably well-substantiated story which states that every piece he—Cumberland—presented at Drury Lane, while it was under the management of Sheridan, met with strongly-marked rejection. It is well known that in *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, Sheridan depicted Cumberland; and Cumberland's bitter remarks on the treatment of dramatic authors by theatrical managers, in the second volume of his autobiography, may have got some colour from the fact.

George Colman, the dramatic author, when manager of Covent

Garden Theatre, strove hard to suppress Goldsmith as a dramatist; and the last-named author's first comedy owed its representation purely to the efforts of Burke, Johnson, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, and not to the comedy-writing manager's favour. When Goldsmith's second comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer*, came, the same author-manager protested vigorously against its being thrust upon him, and we are told by Cumberland that he would have done so successfully had not Dr. Johnson 'stood forth in all his terrors as champion for the piece.' When it was produced, to guard it from any foul play, the Burkes, with Johnson, Sir Joshua, Caleb Whiteford, Adam Drummond, Cumberland, 'and a phalanx of North British predetermined applauders, under the banner of Major Mills,' with preconcerted signals carefully arranged, assembled in the theatre, after a very merry dinner given to the author at the neighbouring Shakespeare Tavern.

Yet Goldsmith himself attributed the drama's want of progress to the avarice and vanity of actor-managers. He wrote: 'I am not insensible that third nights (the author's nights) are disagreeable drawbacks upon the annual profits of the stage. I am confident it is much more to the manager's advantage to furbish up all the lumber which the good sense of our ancestors, but for his care, had consigned to oblivion. . . . For the future it is somewhat unlikely that he whose labours are valuable, or who knows their value, will turn to the stage for either fame or subsistence, when he must at once flatter an actor and please an audience.'

Cumberland, speaking of the powers actors exercise with regard to the dramatists, wrote: 'It is to be lamented that their influence

is such as to induce an author to make greater sacrifices, and pay more attention to the particular persons he has in view to represent the characters of the play, than to the general interest of the play itself; and add that the actor's 'unaccommodating caprice reduces the author either to sacrifice the harmony of his composition out of flattery to their freaks, or, by submitting to the rebuff, put his play upon its trial with the discouraging circumstance attached to it of having begged its way through the repugnant heroes and heroines of the green-room.'

Leigh Hunt, in his autobiography, states that he had heard actors confess 'that Shakespeare would be damned to-morrow were he to write again,' which goes to show how small the chance of another Shakespeare may have been with these actors for managers. On the other side, writers who were anything but Shakespeares, whose plays have been written for the actors rather than 'the general interests of the play,' or those of the drama, have always been most popular with actor-managers, or with managers who were themselves under the control of 'star' actors. It is amusing, when remembering that most of our standard plays were rejected by actors, to read, in Fitzball's ingenuous autobiography, that pleasing the actors 'is the greatest proof an author for the stage can judge by; that Barry Sullivan pronounced his Egyptian tragedy of *Nitocris* 'little inferior to the best works of the kind on the stage,' and that Miss Glyn, and even Mrs. Selby, echoed that opinion, although 'she had a very indifferent part for talent like hers.' Nor is it less amusing to note the alacrity with which he gives as 'kind and encouraging' the following characteristic epistle from

Mrs. Fitzwilliam after his comedy, *Haughty Word*, renamed *The Widow's Wedding*, had been read at the Haymarket Theatre. This was enclosed in a letter from Buckstone:

'My dear Mr. Fitzball, — I participated in the reading last evening. Mr. Buckstone sees a great deal of good in it, with a few easy alterations. I will play Fanny; but instead of young, timid, and beautiful, you must make her jolly and good-natured, as in *The Rough Diamond* — Yours ever, FANNY FITZWILLIAM.'

Imagine another Shakespeare not only compelled, but (if you can) delighted, to convert the melancholy Jaques into the light-hearted Mercutio at the bidding of a modern player, even if he chanced to be a manager, or she chanced to be a Mrs. Fitzwilliam.

'You see,' wrote Fitzball, 'by the kind encouraging note slipped into Buckstone's envelope, how amiable and considerate she was for others'! And so he gratefully made the 'young, timid, and beautiful,' as per order, 'jolly and good-natured;' and, I believe, nobody ever suspected this singular alteration, or discovered any want of keeping between that part and the whole. But, alas, Mrs. Fitzwilliam died suddenly before *The Haughty Word* could be produced (Sept. 11th, 1854).

John Kemble as actor-manager is said to have so embittered the life of 'Handsome Conway,' by obscuring his dawning talent to exalt his own, that it affected his mind, and was the real cause of his committing suicide in 1828. Donaldson thought 'Conway the only actor fit to succeed John Kemble at Covent Garden in 1817;' and adds, if he 'had remained in provincial shades until

Kemble retired he would have stood alone as Brutus, Coriolanus, Alexander, Romeo, and Jaffier.'

When John Home, in 1755, submitted his tragedy of *Douglas* — the only one of his many plays that survive — to Garrick, to whom he had previously and vainly offered another tragedy, and to whom he carried the most flattering letters of introduction, it was promptly rejected and sent back, with a note pronouncing it 'totally unfit for the stage.' But after it had, through the influence of powerful friends, been produced, with immense success, at the Edinburgh Theatre, and the elder Sheridan had marked his admiration of it by sending its author a gold medal, and great friends of high rank — Lord Bute amongst others — had exercised influence to get it brought out at Covent Garden, where also it was greatly successful, then the actor-manager Garrick became Mr. Home's 'warmest patron,' and, in the interests of the drama, produced the long since extinct and much inferior tragedy of *Agis*, writing to its author, on the morning after its production, as follows:

'My dear friend, — Joy, joy, joy to you! My anxiety yesterday gave me a small touch of my old complaint; but our success has stopped the one and cured the other. I am very happy, because I think you are so,' &c.

There are anecdotes extant of even the finest actors the stage has known more than enough to show how unsafe the higher interests of the drama are in their hands. James Quin, although an educated man and professor of elocution to the Royal Family, knew so little of histrionic literature that he was astonished to find the Macbeth he had always played

was not Shakespeare's. 'What,' he asked, 'does little Davy mean by all this nonsense about a new version? Don't I act Shakespeare's Macbeth?' Mrs. Pritchard, whom Dr. Johnson called 'an inspired idiot,' was doubtless wonderfully great as a tragic actress; but her interest in the drama is shown when we learn that the only portion of *Macbeth* she had ever read was the part she is said to have played so grandly, Lady Macbeth. When Tom Dibdin was suggesting to the famous comedian Munden that the part of 'Old Liberal,' in one of his plays, was intended to be played 'in humble imitation' of 'Matthew Bramble,' the player cried, 'And who the devil's Matthew Bramble?'

'You are pleased to joke, sir,' said the deferential dramatist (Tom was generally deferential to great actors). 'You have, of course, read *Humphry Clinker*?'

'Not I, sir,' replied Quin. 'After I left school I never read any books but plays, and no play unless I had a part in it, and even then no more of such play than was immediately connected with the character assigned me.'

Had Dibdin been a dramatist of to-day he would have known better. He would not have thought of Matthew Bramble, but Joseph Munden, when writing his play.

Douglas Jerrold, on at least one occasion, confessed that his play was written as 'Hissgoose,' the tailor, made coats—to fit the purchaser only, and that any other actors but those for whom it was designed must spoil his work! It was not made to fit them. So strongly was he impressed with this idea that when the actor-manager Charles Kean produced his play, *A Heart of Gold*, and, in defiance of the original inten-

tion of both Jerrold and Kean, left himself out of 'the cast,' the angry playwright and his actor-manager had a desperate quarrel, in which the lawyers played their costly parts. Can you conceive any dramatist writing a play intended to live, which depended confessedly upon a single actor, who, in anger or from mere caprice, might decline to play the part assigned him?

Charles Kean was a famous actor-manager, who brought out various new pieces, and restored to the stage Colley Cibber's *Richard III.* in the place of Shakespeare's, which Macready had previously revived; and his judgment in selecting playwrights, highly as it has been lauded, did not, it seems, benefit his treasury, for his personal friend and biographer, J. W. Cole, a clever amateur actor, has told us that his new pieces were so seldom productive that they 'enforced their own termination by the most coercive of all arguments—a heavy balance on the wrong side of the ledger.'

When Colman's play, *The Africans*, was sent to John Kemble, as the actor-manager of Covent Garden, Harris asked what it was about? 'O,' replied Kemble, 'it will never do. There are three black men, who sell their mother.'

'Colman must be mad,' said Harris; 'send it back to him at once.'

The play was afterwards successful at the Haymarket, and Harris discovered that Kemble either did not read it before he pronounced judgment, or had very carelessly glanced through it. Liston won no small portion of his fame in it as Matthew Mug. Perhaps Kemble had, for the nonce, adopted the rule Menage had when advising Cardinal de Retz to judge poems submitted to

him for criticism—that of looking over a page or two and saying, ‘Sad stuff! wretched poetaster!’ on the ground that, ninety-nine times in a hundred, he would be sure to be right.

John Kemble did not consider Shakespeare fit for the stage until he had ‘adapted’ him; and as his adaptations exist in print in several editions, it is not difficult to understand the extent to which Shakespeare suffered by Kemble’s clumsy and inartistic process.

Garrick altered *Hamlet*, by omitting many of the scenes, and, as he said, ‘rescuing that noble play from all the rubbish of the fifth act.’ As Boaden tells, ‘He cut out the voyage to England, and the execution of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. He omitted the funeral of Ophelia, and all the wisdom of the prince, and the rude jocularities of the gravediggers, &c., remodelling and almost entirely rewriting the last act; all the many additions being produced, as even Boaden says, ‘in a mean and trashy commonplace manner; which, in a word, sullied the page of Shakespeare and disgraced the taste and judgment of Mr. Garrick.’ It was by successive actor-managers that Lord Lansdowne’s disgraceful farce, *The Jew of Venice*, was substituted for Shakespeare’s noble play, *The Merchant of Venice*, which Charles Macklin had the honour of reviving.

Miss Mitford’s *Rienzi*, after its production at Covent Garden, was generally admitted to be the most successful and meritorious tragedy that had been produced for twenty years. Yet it had been four years

in the possession of the management, and would not then have appeared, as Macready said, if a young lady who was coming out on the boards had not been told that the part of Claudia was one for which she was peculiarly fitted. The late Mr. Tom Taylor, in one of his magazine articles on the theatre, complained of the star system as creating ‘one-part’ plays, in which the art of the author is maimed to feed the vanity of the player. Stars and actor-managers are commonly one. It has been said of actor-managers, ‘One piece succeeds, and a troop of pieces written in imitation of the successful one immediately monopolises the stage. They inquire not into the causes which may have made such a piece, in its novelty, attractive; but infer that what has drawn good houses will continue to do so, and indulge their monomania till successive failures more than counterbalance the original profits.’

And now, how stands the argument of actor-managers v. author-managers? Here the reader must step in, for my space is exhausted. It is time that I laid aside my pen; but, ere I do so, let me add that there are two sides to every question. It is so here. But of late it is so much the custom to regard actor-managers as the drama’s best friends, and their taste and judgment as final and conclusive in everything histrionic, that the other side has been altogether ignored; and I thought a peep at it might set some critical writers thinking, and some lovers of the drama also. That is all.

A. H. WALL.

THE OLD BOOKSTALL.

Walker's Hibernian Magazine.

THERE are few things more interesting than a magazine of the last century. Far more than in any history do we see our forefathers as they were at home. Strange peeps are revealed of the doings and amusements of a bygone age, and the tale is told without any varnish or disguise on the part of the narrator.

What the *Gentleman's Magazine* was to England, *Walker's Hibernian Magazine* was to Ireland during the latter half of the eighteenth century. It has, perhaps, a more marked individuality of character and a stronger flavour of provincialism than the *Gentleman's*, and for these causes suits the curiosity-monger even better. It was at once a newspaper and a monthly miscellany of useful and entertaining literature. It not only gave parliamentary debates and the latest births, deaths, and marriages, but also tit-bits of London and Dublin gossip, the newest outrages, the most thrilling sentimental tales *à la* Werther, along with scraps of poetry and *tête-à-tête* portraits of the leading fashionable belles and beaux of the day. There was no reserve in stating the fortunes, and even ages, of brides: 'Miss So-and-so with 20,000*l.*' is a common thing to see, and is set down with a charming frankness which we of the present day would hardly care to copy. It was no wonder that the monthly budgets of *Walker's Hibernian* were eagerly looked for in remote districts of

the country. As the mail-coaches ploughed toilsomely along through miles of snow or slush to Drogheda, Kilkenny, or Mallow, the precious parcels of magazines were left at the wayside inns. Here messengers were waiting on ragged mountain ponies, and the magazines were duly distributed amongst the great houses of the neighbourhood. The 'master' seized upon them first; then the young ladies devoured the tales, wept over the poetry, conned the fashion-plates, and studied the latest instructions for building up edifices in hair. After them the numerous 'hangers-on' of the establishment had their turn, and pounced upon the precious pages in order to find out who had fought the last duel, or won the 10,000*l.* prize in the State lottery. The snowed-up gentry had no other literary pabulum to amuse or interest them; Walker supplied them with scandal, politics, gossip, and recipes for curing glanders in horses, and rheumatism or dropsy in themselves. What strikes us very forcibly in reading over these pages of faded print is the remarkable coincidences which we find between the events of that day and of our own. The outrages of 1882 have indeed strange parallels in those of 1778: secret murders, midnight raids on private houses, houghing of cattle—all these abounded then, and seem strangely familiar in our ears. For instance, here are a few stray passages, culled at random from *Walker's Hibernian*

Magazine for 1778. Have we not seen hundreds of similar accounts during the last four years in our own newspapers?

'As a servant of Patrick Lynch of Clogher, Esq., was peaceably returning from the races of Castlebar, he was waylaid by Michael Hanegan, Matthew McDonogh, and Michael Murphy, on the road to Belcarra, who in a most inhuman manner murdered him.' 'Saturday night.—A number of villains armed went on the lands of Castlegordon, in the county of Meath, and houghed 18 head of black cattle, and between 70 and 80 sheep, the property of a gentleman, a Quaker, living on said lands; after which they left a threatening letter that if he did not sell a quarter of beef for eight shillings, and mutton proportionately cheap, they were determined to rob and destroy his house, and every other part of his property.'

From Connaught we hear 'that no less than 53 bullocks and 209 sheep have been cruelly mangled on their way from Ballinäsloe fair.' From Kilkenny news comes 'that on Wednesday night a number of Whiteboys assembled at the house of James Purcell of Macully, near Dunmore, tytheproctor, from whence they carried him about six miles, and cut off his ears.' About the same date there is an account of dangerous mobs at Cork, and of a 'set of inhuman wretches, who rubbed turpentine into the back of a cow and then set fire to it.' This, too, was the time when a man might be hung for stealing a sheep. In the same magazine we find that Michael McMahon, Patrick McMahon, Dennis Neal, and Daniel McCarty were executed at Waterford for robberies, and that John Gorman was sentenced to be hanged at Naas for robbing three houses at

Celbridge. So that strong remedies did not mend matters much.

In strange contrast with this black list comes intelligence of fêtes and expensive gaieties which enlivened Dublin during the viceroyalty of the Earl of Buckingham. At a certain house in the Phoenix Park a series of private theatricals was given, and the hostess appeared in a costume which is described with much gusto as 'a pink satin Venetian night-gown, with a most elegant blossom-coloured petticoat, wrought by herself, and trimmed with gauze flowers and jewels.' In the concluding piece she wore a gold ground silk, ornamented with artificial and silver flowers, and with diamonds to the amount of 100,000*l.* On the 16th March there was a masquerade at the Fishamble-street Rooms. The company began to assemble about twelve, and at two A.M. the rooms were quite full. The Duke of Leinster appeared as a fruit-woman, who changed her oranges for shamrocks as Patrick's Day advanced, afterwards as a physician. Lord Glerawley was a 'sideboard of plate.' Sir Vesey Colclough a 'sweep-chimney.' Mr. Finley a 'large fashionable lady,' &c. Side by side with this account we hear of a duel which was fought near Sir Harry Cavendish's wall in the park. 'The pistol of the gentleman who fired first burst in his hand, and one of the splinters of the barrel struck him in the right eye, and, penetrating to the optic nerve of the next, struck it fairly across, by which the young gentleman is become totally blind.'

Startling announcements appear now and then in the marriage columns. It would be hard to find a parallel for such a one as this: 'Mr. John Hogarty of Bally-

macduff, Co. Dublin, aged twenty, to Mrs. Flood of said place, aged eighty-six.'

Here is another :

'Mr. Michael Heyden of Castle-town, Co. Sligo, aged seventy-eight, to Mrs. Honora Ward, aged sixty-eight; having in number between children and grandchildren thirty.'

The same candour is shown with regard to the amount of money accumulated by certain limbs of the law, the whole sum being gravely set down after the name and age of the deceased.

Among the most curious gems of the magazine is one called 'The Odd Prayer of a Miser.' Whether it is a genuine compilation or a clever invention, it would be impossible to say; but, at any rate, there is a grim humour about it which reminds us more of 'Holy Willie's Prayer' than of anything else in literature. It runs as follows :

'O Lord, Thou knowest that I have nine houses in Dublin, and likewise that I have lately purchased an estate in fee simple in the county of Wicklow; therefore I beseech Thee to preserve the two counties of Dublin and Wicklow from fire and earthquake. And, as I have a mortgage in Monaghan, I beg of Thee likewise to have an eye of compassion on that county; and for all the rest of the counties Thou mayest deal with them as Thou pleasest. O, enable the bankers to answer all their bills, and make all my debtors good men. Give a prosperous voyage and return to the Mermaid sloop, which I have insured. And as Thou hast said that the days of the wicked shall be short, I trust in Thee that Thou wilt not forget Thy promise, having purchased an estate in reversion of Sir J. C—, a profligate young man. I also pray Thee to keep our friends

from sinking; and, if it be Thy will, let there be no sinking funds. And keep my son Caleb out of evil company and gaming-houses; and sanctify this night to me by preserving me from thieves and fire, and make my servants honest and careful, while I, Thy faithful servant, lie down in peace. So be it.'

But the *Hibernian Magazine* not only gave items of Irish intelligence; it also conveyed news from the great London world; and the loyal subjects of George III. must have been delighted to read the following, dated June 1778 :

'This evening their Majesties, attended by nine of their beauteous offspring, were at Drury Lane Theatre to see *The Clandestine Marriage* and *Queen Mab*. The Prince of Wales, Bishop of Osnaburgh, and the Princes William and Edward, sat in the Prince's state-box. The Princess Royal, two other princesses, and two junior princes sat on the stage side of their Majesties' box, over which a separate canopy of blue and silver was erected for the occasion. The audience were so delighted with the illustrious spectacle that they received them with acclamations bordering on idolatry! Their attention during the play was principally directed to the sprightly sallies of the youngest but one of the princes. At the striking up of the music after the first act he went through all the fiddling motions, and afterwards laughed incessantly at every comic circumstance that occurred, which was repeatedly applauded by the admiring multitude. The pantomime of *Queen Mab* delighted all the little ones beyond expression. The youngest prince but one, perceiving Mr. King in Lord Ogleby attempting to open Fanny's door, which was locked,

cried out, "Kick, kick, and then they'll let you in!" which threw the house into an immoderate burst of laughter. Their Majesties appeared as much delighted as the audience on the above occasion.'

Anecdotes of that period seem to abound. In the year 1779 Dr. Fowler was Archbishop of Dublin, being translated in that year from Killaloe. He was remarkable for his strict discipline in Church government, and is said not to have been blessed with the best temper in the world, being overbearing and pompous in manner to his inferiors. Shortly after his elevation to the archbishopric he came to St. Patrick's Cathedral on a week-day at three o'clock. Finding that the gentlemen of the choir were not in attendance, and supposing that he had jurisdiction in the church, he thus called the verger to him:

'Hullo, fellow, come here! Where's the dean?'

'He's in the chapter-house, may it please your grace,' stammered the quivering official.

'Tell him to come instantly and attend me here.'

Away went the verger to the dean, whom he found sitting in a room in the chapter-house with Dr. Ledwich, then 'one of the minor canons.

'Please your reverence, Mr. Dean, his grace the archbishop requires your presence immediately in the cathedral.'

'Present my compliments to his grace,' replied the dean, 'and say if he wants to see the dean he will find him here.'

The verger returned and delivered the message verbatim to the archbishop, who could scarcely conceal his anger at the want of respect which he considered the dean had shown him. He made up his mind, however, to proceed to the chapter-house; and, on en-

tering the room where the dean and Dr. Ledwich were sitting, addressed the former as follows:

'Ho, Mr. Dean, what's become of the men of the choir? Why are they not at the cathedral? Let them know in future I shall require them to be present in the choir every day at three P.M.'

The dean, who was calm and dignified in manner, replied,

'Please your grace, the gentlemen of the choir are not accustomed to attend on week-days unless specially informed that their services will be required; and I apprehend you will find that I am the person who am authorised to enforce their attendance.'

The archbishop made no reply to this observation, but, evidently mortified at the mistake he had made, retired. Dr. Ledwich, who was a man of considerable humour and wit, lost no time in thus reducing the dialogue which he had heard to verse:

Archbishop.

"Mr. Dean," said his grace,
New-fangled in place,
"What's become of the men of the choir?
Let them know, sir, I pray,
That henceforward, each day,
Their attendance at three I desire."

The Dean.

"Please your grace," said the Dean,
"The matter is plain—
They're not used to attend here at three.
I, besides, apprehend
That to make them attend
Is a right belongs only to me."

Moral.

A Fowler of fame,
For taking good aim,
Should be careful his sport not to spoil,
Nor, when his gun's large,
His piece to discharge,
Lest its force on himself might recoil.'

Dr. Ledwich's verses soon became known, and Dr (afterwards Sir) John Stevenson, having obtained a copy, composed a catch for the words, which for many years was sung at the festive meetings of the vicars choral as a sort of charter-song.

C. J. HAMILTON.

A POLISH NOVELIST.

KRASZEWSKI.

KRASZEWSKI is the first of contemporary Polish novelists in the estimation of his compatriots. He is a notable member of that brilliant coterie of Polish writers who arose towards 1828 in the wake of Mickiewicz, Slowacki, and Krasiński, and who, like their fore-runners, made it their aim to arouse a love for, and interest in, their country. Kraszewski was born at Warsaw on July 26, 1812, and was educated at Wilna. His studies completed, he settled on his estate in the province of Volhynia, and devoted himself entirely to literature. He has by no means confined his energy to novel-writing, but wandered over various fields, winning spurs in all. Poetry, drama, philosophy, history, criticism, philology, are among the various departments he has touched. Journalism also attracted him; it gave him scope to ventilate the grievances of his countrymen, to vindicate their claims to European attention, to arouse interest among his own nation in literature and art. In 1859 he even became editor of a daily paper—a post he retained until 1864, when he left Poland to live in Dresden.

Kraszewski is a totally new apparition among his countrymen. Their fictitious literature had, up to his time, been entirely founded upon imitations of romantic French novels, rendered yet more romantic and more wildly impossible by their transplantation into a foreign soil. There was no reality in the

life they depicted; they reproduced, bluntly, blindly, what they had read in such fashion, according to Kraszewski's own dictum, 'as are reproduced on pocket-handkerchiefs the works of the great masters.' Kraszewski rose above these tendencies. It was he who first looked at home for subjects, for inspirations, and thus became the Polish novelist *par excellence*. He took his themes from Polish family and national life; he mirrored forth faithfully their excellences, but also their defects. The moral and social conflicts that agitate his nation are scrupulously reproduced in his pages. A sincere and ardent patriot, he is not blind to the serious and deep-rooted faults of his countrymen, and he shows them with relentless vigour how these sap their vitality, their possibility of national existence. He is not afraid to tell them unpalatable truths; and while encouraging the aspirations of young Poland, he points out its dangers with a warning voice. But beside the present, Kraszewski loves to paint the Polish past, to keep alive the traditions of the country. Above all he loves to depict the time of Stanislaus Augustus and the Elector of Saxony. *Morituri*, one of his longest and most noteworthy novels, is founded on events occurring in the reign of the former monarch. The scene is laid at Warsaw, and presents vivid pictures of contemporary society. The story deals with

the decline of a princely family, of which it furnishes a fine description. Of late years, indeed, Kraszewski has devoted himself almost wholly to historical romances, and on this domain it is claimed for him that he resembles the elder Dumas. The comparison, however, scarcely holds. He has not the fire, the wonderful imagination of the Frenchman, and, on the other hand, he is more historically correct. At the present time this veteran novelist has undertaken a vast task, much resembling in character Freytag's cycle of *Die Ahnen*. He too wishes to present to his countrymen, in novelistic form, a series of romances, of which the various subjects are to be derived from successive epochs of Polish history. Excellent and accurate though these historical romances are, they are not as good as Kraszewski's earlier writings. The scenes of many of these are laid amid the forests and villages of Lithuania, whose people have preserved uncontaminated the best traditions of the Poles, and among whom patriarchal customs still linger.

Since he has lived at Dresden Kraszewski has issued, under the pseudonym of Boleslawita, novellettes describing the latest phase of the Polish revolution and the rising of 1863, bringing into prominence, with much force, the inherent and national differences between Russians and Poles. Indeed, occasionally this is done in too polemical a fashion, considering the framework wherein it is introduced. He points out the various and characteristic tendencies of the modern Pole, how he is frivolous, flighty, narrow-visioned, sincerely, but often foolishly, patriotic. He introduces his readers to secret conspirators, to prisons, to flight, to the pains of

exile; in short, he runs through the whole gamut of national misfortune. The burning Jewish question of Poland is also ventilated in his pages—a burning question truly in this country, where the numerical proportion of the Jews makes them of great moment amid a population whose language they rarely learn, and to whom they hence must remain eternal strangers.

The importance of Kraszewski as a national novelist is indubitably great. From the artistic point of view he is by no means without serious faults. His composition is loose; there is a want of dramatic power in his tales, which rather resemble verbal narration, and thus bear an Oriental impress. There is a feeling, in reading him, that he is appealing to a people who have much time to spare, who do not weary of details, and are not impatient when the same incident is retold by different personages. Indeed, this oral character is a recognised feature in Polish imaginative literature, and novels are called by a name that corresponds to recitation. There is a certain uniformity in his style, his dialogue lacks spirit; he also repeats himself too much, the same scenes and situations recur too often. This fault, however, is probably due to the enormous fecundity into which a great facility has betrayed him. Nevertheless, for all his faults, he is an interesting writer, if only for the strange and unaccustomed environment into which he leads us. Nor is this his only merit. He draws characters forcibly; he has a wide sympathy with the weak, uncertain, human heart; he has an eye for the picturesque, the characteristic, the true. The regard entertained for him by his own countrymen was amply attested some time ago, when the

occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of his literary *début* was made quite a national festival.

The story from which we quote is one of his most popular folk-tales, *Jermola the Potter*. The scene of action is in a remote hamlet of Volhynia. Within the narrow framework of the story are introduced the various elements that form Polish society—the nobleman, the husbandman, and the Jew; and as a social photograph of Polish life, it has been universally praised by those best fitted to judge. The hero of the story, an old man, finds, like Silas Marner, a child laid at his doorstep; and, as with his English analogue, whom he in some degree resembles, except in the matter of avarice, the child becomes the centre of his thoughts and interests.

THE FOUNDLING.

Old Jermola walked slowly towards his tumble-down dwelling, his head full of the revived remembrances of his life.

It was neither a cottage nor a farm; rather a ruin, an old forsaken tavern, for some reason fallen into decay. Jermola was accustomed to this melancholy abode; he approached it without repugnance, turned the handle, and opened the door. Darkness already prevailed there; he struck a light, and kindled a few shavings that lay ready in the stove.

When the old man had kindled the shavings in the stove—for a light was regarded as an extravagant luxury—he cast a glance around to see whether everything was in order; took a pot, in which to warm his supper, which the old Cossack's wife had brought him from the village, or which he himself had cooked well or badly; seated himself on a stool by the fire, and began to say the Lord's

Prayer. The wind rustled in the branches of the pines and oaks in the garden; otherwise there was silence around. Jermola had become absorbed in thought over his prayer, when the silence was broken by the crying of a child, at first soft, and gradually becoming louder and louder. It was the voice of a whining infant, and was as near as though it were behind the door.

'What may that be?' said the old man to himself, interrupting his prayer and rising from his seat. 'So late at night? It cannot be a silly woman, who is going on to the rafts now with her child, or coming to me for medicine?'

He listened; but the whining neither approached nor retreated. Then the child must be lying close by. At this hour, on such a cold evening, surely no one could have put a cradle there. And the child's cry is so piteous.

'It must be an owl,' said the old man, returning to his seat; 'it is screeching up in an oak-tree, and yet I could swear that it is a child's voice. I call that a wonderful imitation.'

He listened again; the crying became plainer and more painful.

'No, that is not an owl; that is really beyond my comprehension; I must go and look; perhaps a misfortune has happened somewhere. Whatever can it be?'

With these words he sprang up quickly, drew his cap over his ears, took his stick in his hand, and, forgetting even his beloved pipe, ran out of the door. On the threshold he was already convinced that there could be no doubt about its being a poor child's whining, and not an owl's cry. The old man was quite overcome by this, and, led by the whimpering voice, he began his search, and saw, not far from the

little garden, something white under an oak. His old eyes had not deceived him; on a little moss-covered elevation lay, wrapped in white swaddling-clothes, a crying infant.

A child—a child abandoned and exposed by its parents! The old man's brain could not take that in. He was stupefied with amazement, surprise, pity, and sorrow; he ran hither and thither, not knowing what to do. At last he took up the child, which, in consequence probably of feeling the movement, immediately ceased crying. Like a thief with his stolen property, forgetting even his stick, old Jermola ran into his room, still repeating, 'A child! a child! What can it mean?'

Suddenly the idea occurred to him that perhaps the child had only been deposited by its mother for a moment, for some reason or other, and she would be uneasy if she did not find it again. He now began to call loudly, and to knock his fingers in the Polish manner, so that the echo recalled to him his shepherd-days; but no one answered.

'I cannot expose the poor thing to the cold any longer,' said he feelingly; 'I will go into the cottage; perhaps something may occur to me which will bring me on the track.'

He opened the door; the fire was extinguished in the stove, the room was in darkness. He quickly deposited his burden on the bed, and fanned the fire into a flame; this time sparing no shavings. When the room was again light, the old man hastened to the crying child, and then his surprise and terror reached the highest point. This was evidently no village child; the swaddling-clothes alone proved that. Jermola could not understand how and why a mother or a father could make up

their minds to reject so small and innocent a being, the mere sight of which made him weep with pity and emotion.

In fact, from the moment when he heard the first cry, a strange feeling had come over the old man, generally so calm: he was excited, terrified, and yet new life had come to him; he seemed twenty years younger. Filled with curiosity, he approached the mysterious creature, that Fate, taking pity on his loneliness, had granted him as a consolation, while he was seeking some tie to bind him still to the world. The child was carefully wrapped up, but in such a manner that even its wraps gave no clue to its origin. The unnatural mother or careless father had, with some remnant of care, wrapped the child in a large piece of thick white cotton, which only revealed a small part of the face distorted by crying. Jermola looked at the child with ever-increasing excitement, and continued to wring his hands. Then suddenly the thought occurred to him that he stood in need of good advice, that the crying baby must be hungry, and that to bear the burden so unexpectedly imposed on him was beyond his power. Like a sudden lightning-flash it was revealed to him that here was need of nurse, cradle, and motherly care, while his means would not permit him to supply all these. And then hired hands did not appear to him worthy to touch this divine gift, as this foundling child seemed to him. He considered himself the chosen father, whom Providence had destined for the poor orphan. The thought that the child might be taken from him caused him the greatest alarm.

'No, I will give it back to no one; it is my child—my own! God has sent it me. I will not drive away the orphan.'

Quite overcome by this strange event, he was carrying the child up and down in the room, when a heavy packet fell out of the swaddling-clothes on to the ground. He almost dropped the child.

'So it is a rich man who has cast his own flesh and blood from him, and pays to have it taken off his hands.'

The old man became thoughtful; he tried his best to understand the world that he had hitherto known so little, and there came into his heart an intuition which in one moment revealed to him the whole blackness, misery, and sorrow of life.

'Good God!' thought he to himself, 'there might even be people who would take this from the orphan. No, no one shall know anything about it. I will keep the money till the child is grown up; I shall manage to rear it alone.'

He threw the gold into an old casket which stood near his bed, and in which he usually kept his few pence. Then he wrapped the child in his *oponcza* (cloak), and ran frightened and happy with it to the nearest cottage; there to take counsel with his neighbours.

There lived the wife of the Cossack Harassym, who was universally called, after her husband's rank, the Kozaczicha. She lived there with her only daughter.

Fortunately Jermola did not meet a living creature before the Kozaczicha's door, as he approached the cottage breathlessly with the crying child.

Only the flickering fire shining through the window showed that the mistress was at home, and the old man entered with his burden. The Kozaczicha sat on a bench near the table, leaning on her arm, lost in thought. Horpyna sat by the stove. Both were silent and

sad; but a glance at Jermola, entering with the child on his arm, sufficed to rouse them and move them to a cry of astonishment.

'What is it, old man? What is that?' asked the mother.

'What—what?' exclaimed Jermola, sinking into a seat and laying the child on his lap without taking his eyes from it. 'Look, and see what it is; it is a child that God has given me.'

'What! you?'

'It is a miracle. But I do not know what to do. When I came back from the raft by the river I lighted my fire, and began my prayer, when I heard something crying under the oaks. "It is an owl," I say to myself; "they build their nests in the old oaks." I continue my prayer, but the whining recommences. I could not keep still; I became anxious; ran to the spot. I seek and look, and see there—I find a child. What am I to do now?'

The two women, the old and the young one, listened full of curiosity to Jermola's words, and shook their heads in silence.

'Some one has exposed it,' exclaimed the old woman; 'but who?'

'But who could throw down a child like that?' exclaimed the old man indignantly. 'Is such a thing possible?'

'O, O, we know such people,' answered the old woman, shaking her head. 'Much worse stories even are told of people's wickedness. Have you never heard of the new-born baby that the unnatural mother threw into the trough to feed the pigs, so that no trace of her shame might remain?'

Old Jermola looked amazed, with his eyes wide open, at the Kozaczicha, and shrugged his shoulders. Meantime the two

women knelt down by the child, to examine it more closely.

'What a white cloth it is wrapped in!'

'How delicate it is!'

'It must be a gentlefolk's child. Who of us would dare do such a thing? Besides, we have no occasion for it.'

'And to choose just the place by your cottage!'

'But advise me what to do,' begged the old man.

'Well—what you like,' answered the Kozaczicha. 'You can take it to the steward; he will make it over to the magistrates, and they will place it in some hospital.'

'Place it in some hospital!' exclaimed Jermola, trying to restrain himself. 'You are fine counsellors! And who is to see to it there, and take care of it? They might even let the poor creature starve.'

The old woman shrugged her shoulders.

'But how will you get advice about the child?' asked she.

'That is just what I am asking you, my friend.'

'What do you think?'

'How should I know what to think? There is a mill-wheel turning in my head. On no account whatever would I cast out this child that God Himself has given into my charge, yet I do not know whether I shall succeed in tending it; still it does not seem to me quite impossible.'

'You must find a nurse for it. Jurek's wife would be a suitable one.'

'On no account,' exclaimed Jermola; 'that bad woman would torture the poor little thing to death, and, besides, want I know not how much money; and as it is, my pence go one after another. If you would give it a little milk—just look how it is

twisting and turning itself—perhaps it would drink; then I could buy the milk from you.'

The Kozaczicha burst out laughing.

'What! Do you mean to tend it, amuse it, nurse it, rock it, yourself? And then, as if that were all that had to be done! A child is always giving one something to do. I remember the trouble I had with my oldest, my poor Tymoszek, who did not live a year; and then with Horpyna—no peace, night or day.'

'As if I slept much or worked so very much!' answered the obstinate Jermola, whose new-found treasure was every moment becoming more precious to him. 'A few hours' sleep are more than enough for me; and a little child like this goes on sleeping, so long as it is not hungry. I shall find time enough to sleep a little, and to see after the garden, and roast a few potatoes.'

'But what do you mean to feed it with?'

'Well—with milk.'

'But if it cannot drink yet? It is so tiny.'

Jermola sighed.

'Well, what we cannot do, we learn. But give me better advice.'

The Kozaczicha took the crying baby in her arms and looked at it with pleasure; the daughter ran to fetch some new milk, and in so doing let fall a word to her neighbour, who carried it on, so that soon the neighbours, attracted by curiosity, came first singly, then in pairs, and at last in crowds, and surrounded the old man. Since the village existed, nothing similar had ever occurred, as far as the oldest inhabitant could remember; nor had they ever heard of any such thing. There was a continual talk and buzz. Every one came with good advice: the magistrate, the elders

of the commune, the women and boys, each tried to talk down the other; the same thing was discussed again and again, and the majority agreed with the Kozaczicha, who recommended Jurek's wife as the nurse. And what desperate conjectures, what bold assertions, what jokes and votes of censure, were passed on the dishonourable parents! But no one could bring forward any well-founded suspicion. No stranger had been seen in the village that evening; the streets were deserted; neither in the inn nor at the ferry had any travellers been seen. After a long discussion, the assembly broke up to go and carry the important news abroad. Only the old Chwedko remained behind, well known as the owner of the shaggy mare. Leaning on his stick and slowly collecting his thoughts, he said to Jermola,

'Something has occurred to me. It must be about twenty years ago since I heard of it. In Malyczek a man I knew was left a widower; his wife had just died, after giving birth to a little daughter. The poor distressed man could not find any nurse for it: he went from cottage to cottage; no one would take in the orphan; he had not even a cow to feed it with milk. Do you know what he did? With the last rouble that was left from the funeral he bought a goat, and brought up his little daughter on its milk; now she is one of the finest girls in the neighbourhood.'

Jermola sprang up in delight.

'Come, bring me the goat!' exclaimed he eagerly. 'Is there a goat to be found anywhere? I will buy a goat!'

'The landlord of the inn has a goat.'

'This is no time to dawdle. I will go and buy it.'

He was already at the door, when the Kozaczicha and Chwedko held him back together.

'By no means,' exclaimed the peasant; 'the Jew will fleece you dreadfully if he sees how much you need the goat.'

'Let him take what he likes, so long as he gives me the goat.'

'You will have to give him your last shirt,' the Kozaczicha interrupted the eager old man. 'Do you not know Schmul? He is a bloodhound; there is not another like him among the Jews. Gently, for God's sake tell him some lie; say you want it for breeding, or you will have to pay as dearly for it as for a cow.'

'I will go with you,' said Chwedko. 'You shall see we will get the better of the Jew.'

'But what shall we do with the child?'

'Do not be afraid; leave it with us, no harm will come to it.'

'Take pity on it, mother,' said Jermola. 'Be careful, I beg of you.'

'What, are you going to teach me? Is it my first child? I will pour some milk into its mouth, if it is only by drops; then I will lull it to sleep. Do not distress yourself.'

'I shall be back in a moment,' assured Jermola; 'but I implore you to see that no harm comes to the child!'

The old woman could not help laughing at his anxiety. Not till he left the house did he remember how long it was since he had smoked. He drew out his pipe, which he always wore in his bosom, filled it quickly, began to smoke it, and then, in spite of the darkness of the night, hastened with Chwedko to the inn, situated in the middle of the village.

It was fortunate that Jermola was accompanied by the much more cunning old Chwedko, who,

accustomed to the snares and wiles of the deceiver, had learnt prudence, and grudging neither time nor words if a penny could be saved. On the road already Chwedko gave Jermola good advice; to which he did not listen, for he was completely absorbed by the idea of possessing the goat. This improvised nurse, unfortunately a favourite of Sara, the landlord's young wife, and of her eldest son, who often pulled her beard, and had to put up with many a kick, was at most worth about twelve Polish gulden. Jermola was quite prepared to pay twenty for it; to which Chwedko did not much object, since the goat was not so very old, and gave good milk. But how was the proposal to be made to Schmul? He would have fleeced them to any extent, had he known of the urgent need. It was therefore necessary to deceive the Jew, to avoid being deceived by him. They approached the inn, when Chwedko became thoughtful, and begged Jermola to withdraw a little.

'Sit down near this cottage,' said he, showing him a seat. 'Wait here; I will go in first, and prepare the Jew. Do not be afraid; we shall manage it.'

Jermola took courage; trusted in Chwedko, who had so warmly espoused his cause; and seated himself on the spot indicated. He certainly needed rest and quiet. Leaning his head on his hands, and absorbed in thought, he now, for the first time for a long while, began to consider the future.

Chwedko first went into the tap-room, but Schmul was not there; only the goat was walking about. Opening the door of the state-room a little way, and wiping his feet, after asking permission, he stepped on to the threshold,

his hat under his arm, amid many bows. He remained carefully standing on the straw-mat—for the Jew became very angry when dirt was brought into his parlour. Thus he had fulfilled all the necessary conditions for being graciously received by Schmul, and the careful Chwedko did not forget ever to address him otherwise than as merchant; for Reb Schmul declared that the tavern business interested him but little, and he only lived in the village for his own amusement.

'Well, what does Chwedko bring?' asked the Jew from his seat, where he was swaying to and fro, like a pendulum, over a religious book. He interrupted his pious reading for the sake of gain, for he knew that God is more indulgent than man.

'Excuse me, sir, there is an opportunity.'

An *opportunity* is the expression used by the people for every unexpected occurrence—every event that gives an opportunity for drinking brandy.

'An opportunity! Well, what sort—christening, wedding, or funeral? I hope nobody is dead. I suppose you want brandy on credit?'

'No; I have heard something by chance, and wanted to acquaint you with it—perhaps a gain.'

'Well, what sort of gain?' broke in Schmul, rising and thrusting his hands in his belt as he approached.

'The gentleman' (this name pleased the Jew particularly) 'must know Jermola, the old man who lives in the tumble-down inn.'

'Why should I not know him?—a poor wretch!'

'That is true; but he has turned up a few roubles somewhere.'

'Well, does he want to spend them in drink?'

'Nothing of the sort. He does not drink brandy, but has taken into his head that he wants to buy a cow—half for credit, half for ready money.'

'A cow! What does he want a cow for?'

'He was just going off to the town about it. I prevented him, for an idea occurred to me.'

'To the town—always to the town!' exclaimed the Jew, shrugging his shoulders. 'Well, speak, Chwedko; what have you thought of?'

'I want to persuade him that it would be better for him, instead of buying a cow on credit, to pay money down for a milk-goat; then he will get milk and in time a kid. Perhaps you would sell him your old white one?'

Schmul looked straight into Chwedko's eyes, but he fortunately did not seem in the least confused; nor was it easy to suspect any fraud in such a proposal. The landlord merely put one question to him, destined to sound him:

'Is Jermola here—in the inn?'

'No,' was the quiet answer; 'he has been with his neighbours ever since midday; but, if you like, I may perhaps succeed in talking him over and bringing him here, although he is not very fond of coming to the inn. But perhaps you have no wish to sell the old goat. I only proposed it out of kindness. Why should the money go out of the village? But if you do not care about it, I will leave him alone, and he can go to the town.'

'But wait a moment, do wait,' said the Jew thoughtfully to Chwedko, who had already seized the door-handle. 'What will he do in the town?'

He called Sara into the room,

and she entered with the air of a spoilt child. They conversed together in their jargon; the Jew speaking gently, his wife very sharply. Chwedko tried to guess, by their gestures and voices, how matters stood; but did not succeed. Soon the Jewess left the room, and Schmul turned once more to Chwedko.

'You are a good fellow,' said he, patting Chwedko on the shoulder. 'If you want brandy on trust I will credit you for a whole rouble, do you hear? Bring Jermola to the inn; the goat is there; he is sure to be pleased with it. A very good goat. How much money has he?'

'I do not know exactly,' answered Chwedko. 'I believe he had about twenty Polish gulden, and the Kozaczicha was going to lend him something.'

The Jew shook his head silently, and sent off the peasant, who hastened to his friend. Soon after Chwedko and old Jermola entered the tap-room. The latter was trembling like an aspen-leaf, and was ashamed of the comedy he was about to perform for the sake of the goat. His first glance fell upon its grave form; and he would certainly have betrayed himself if Schmul had noticed it, but he fortunately was consistently playing his assumed part, and had turned his back to the newcomers.

'Good-evening, sir,' said Chwedko.

'Good-evening.'

Schmul turned round and muttered something in his beard.

'Well, shall we drink a drop?' asked Chwedko.

'I seldom drink,' answered Jermola; 'but, for the sake of company, give us something, Marysia.'

'I hear you are going to the fair,' began Chwedko again. 'You

must have something to set you up for the journey.'

'Well, what do you want at the fair?' asked Schmul. 'If you have something to sell I will buy it of you.'

'No, I have some other business.'

'And if you have,' exclaimed the Jew, 'must you go off at once to the town? You are all of you so ready with the town. Do you want to buy something?'

'I tell you what, sir,' said Chwedko, 'my friend wants to buy a cow. He is dull, and he wants some worry and anxiety.'

'What do you want a cow for?' asked the Jew.

'Bah, it is a convenience, and may be profitable.'

'Good God!' exclaimed Schmul, stretching out his hands, 'it is plain enough that you have never yet had a cow, and do not know what it means to feed a cow. You must find a cow-boy for it. Well, consider what that costs; then the creatures always come back hungry from pasture; then you must buy hay—and hay is as dear as saffron just now; you must buy chaff, and that costs 10*d.* a sack; you must buy clover, and I do not sell that for less than 40*d.*—every one pays me that. Then you must give it green-stuff and potatoes, otherwise it will grow thin. Then it may get ill and not have a calf; and, in any case, for half a year it will not give a drop of milk.'

'But still I should have a calf and some milk.'

'But who will take care of it?' asked the Jew, shrugging his shoulders.

Jermola seemed convinced, and scratched his head meditatively.

'Is not that exactly what I told you?' said Chwedko. 'Cattle bring nothing but worry to poor people—nothing but misery.'

'If only I could have a calf and a little milk!' said Jermola.

'That is easily said,' continued the mediator. 'Nothing is so good for milk as a goat, I can tell you. In the first place, it does not cost much, and can live on anything—stalks, weeds, rubbish. Then it gives no trouble; and when you have drunk your fill of goat's milk, at least you know that you have drunk something. How it smells! How healthy it is!'

'There you spoke a true word,' said the innkeeper slowly. 'I tell you there is nothing better than a goat. We have discovered that already; and we generally keep goats. But that is the way of people; they look on and do not imitate; they have no sense in their heads. A goat is a real treasure.'

'Who knows, perhaps I shall turn the matter over and buy a goat,' said Jermola slowly.

'It is the best thing you can do!' exclaimed Chwedko. 'I tell you that is the most sensible plan. If Mr. Schmul would sell you his white one—'

'What can you be thinking of?' interrupted the Jew hastily, as though he had just caught the words. 'I would not give up my goat for all the money in the world. My wife, my children—they all love it; it is an invaluable creature; it is worth more than a cow.'

'It is a pity,' said Jermola, looking at the goat. 'Why should I have to drag myself to the town? My old legs can hardly carry me. Your goat might perhaps—'

'It is, indeed, a rare goat!' exclaimed the Jew. 'Have you ever seen such a goat? She is so sensible that you can talk to her; and her milk—you hardly know what that is! You will not find

one like her twenty miles round ; it is a treasure, and not a goat ! It is a phenomenon !

'But old,' remarked Jermola slowly.

'Old ! How old ? The old goats are the best. Why, how old is she ? She is really only just beginning her life ; she will live another twenty years !' exclaimed Schmul, becoming more and more excited.

'And what did she cost you ?' asked Jermola.

'What she cost me ? That has nothing to do with the matter. As a kid, she cost me two roubles. But you must know that she is not a common goat ; she belongs to a superior kind. I would not sell her for six roubles ; she eats hardly anything, and is always fat, and has two kids every year.'

A momentary pause ensued. Jermola looked about him, and did not know what to do next ; while he constantly cast glances at the goat, which continued to walk up and down the room, striking the ground with her hoofs, and poking her head everywhere where she perceived anything eatable. She collected remains of leaves, gnawed crusts, and bits of bread. We must do her the justice to say that she trusted in no one, and cared for her own maintenance.

'That would really be something for you,' began the broker Chwedko : 'she is accustomed to the village ; she knows the pasture ; she is experienced ; not very young either ; but gives very good milk.'

'Not a common goat,' added the Jew softly ; 'a superior kind.'

'But what a price !' exclaimed Jermola.

'Well, I will tell you what,' said the Jew, approaching hastily — 'you are a worthy man. I love and honour you ; the people

at the fair will fleece you. I will do something for you, and let you have the goat for three roubles. There, now do as you please.'

Chwedko, who had feared something worse, and was glad to come off so easily, added quickly,

'Come, shake hands upon it, and thank the merchant ; it is dirt-cheap. Pay him, and take it ; I do not grudge it you.'

'For my part, I am willing,' answered the old man ; 'only you must give me a cord to lead the goat home by.'

The unexpected bargain was struck. Jermola took three roubles out of a knot in an old handkerchief, and counted them out to Schmul. The Jew examined them, spit on them, as is customary, and put them in his pocket.

'But you must bring back the cord to-morrow,' he muttered, and folded his cloak round him, preparing to go back to the parlour.

'And the *mohorycz* ?' asked Chwedko softly.

'Jermola must pay that,' said Schmul ; 'but because he did not beat me down—well, you need not pay for the brandy you have drunk ; I have given you the *mohorycz*.'

Old Marysia brought a cord with a noose, which she used for carrying wood, and Chwedko closed the door, and tried to catch the goat, which, suspecting treachery, constantly eluded him. The Jew had taken himself off.

'Well, you two have made a fine bargain !' cried the old woman, when the innkeeper was gone. 'To pay twenty Polish gulden for an old goat ; you might have got three young ones for that at the fair.'

The old men were silent, fastened the cord round the goat's

horns, and set out with their booty. Jermola trembled with joy, the tears ran down his cheeks, and he kissed his friend.

'You have done me a great service ; may God reward you for it !' said Jermola softly.

'But now I must not come into the Jew's sight any more,' sighed Chwedko, as he considered the danger to which he had exposed himself. 'Had we let drop a word about the child the infidel would have guessed everything, and have fleeced you finely.'

Talking in low tones, they returned to the Kozaczicha's cottage,

forcing the goat, who objected to leaving the inn, to obedience by various means. But soon after their departure the storm had broken out at the tavern ; for Sara immediately acquainted her husband with the news she had just heard about the child found before Jermola's hut. Schmul knew at once that he had been taken in, and saw how necessary the goat had been. He bit his fingers with vexation.

'Well, take care, Chwedko, you scoundrel,' said he, shaking his head ; 'unless I die, I will pay you with interest !'

'LOVE IS LIFE, AND LIFE IS LOVE.'

'Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.'

'YOUTH is a folly,' cried the sage ;
 'A struggle is our middle age ;
 Bitter regrets fill up the page ;
 And this,' he sighed, 'is life.'

The man who finds existence such
 A weary struggling over-much
 Has never felt the magic touch
 Which love can give to life.

Another says that from life's cup
 In early youth we nectar sup,
 But that when this has been quaffed up
 A nauseous draught is life.

Just drop into your cup, dear friend,
 A little love, and then depend,
 True love, which loveth till the end,
 Will sweeten all the life.

G. V. S.

THREE WIZARDS AND A WITCH.

BY MRS. J. H. RIDDELL, AUTHOR OF 'THE SENIOR PARTNER,'
'GEORGE GEITH OF FEN COURT,' ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

WILL HE PROPOSE?

It was to the house in Brunswick-square, which had for years been tenanted by the Jubbins, that Mr. Gayre repaired on the afternoon following his visit to Chislehurst. Opinion in Bloomsbury was divided as to whether the banker had proposed to the widow and been rejected, or was still making up his mind to put the momentous question.

Concerning the first alternative, Mrs. Jubbins could have enlightened her friends; but with regard to the second it was impossible for her to say, even mentally, aught save 'I hope and I fear.' There were days when she hoped, and there were days when she feared; yet as months and years glided away, she grew very sick with 'hope deferred.' She believed the man, the only man she had ever truly loved with the one love of a woman's heart, would some day ask her to be his wife; nevertheless, she did not quite understand him; surely that wound, which had changed the frank, brilliant, charming youth into a still more interesting, if less comprehensible, man, ought to have been healed long ago!

And now Mrs. Jubbins had some reason for believing he meant to marry her. Old Mr. Gayre, keeping to the letter of his promise, if not to the spirit, confided to Mrs. Higgs that 'my son Nicholas was thinking seriously of her daughter, and he, Mr.

Gayre, should feel glad if the young man proposed and Mrs. Jubbins accepted him.' To Mrs. Higgs, the idea of her daughter wedding into the Gayres seemed a thing almost too good to realise, and in her exultation at the suggestion she forgot to maintain that reserve Mr. Gayre had stipulated on. So Eliza was given to understand Nicholas had intimated he meant to 'think of her;' and Nicholas, like his father, fulfilling the mere letter of his promise, did for a whole year think of his old playfellow with an ever-increasing dislike towards the connection. He did not want directly to cross his parent's wishes, but he felt to make Eliza Jubbins his wife would be to settle his own future in an utterly distasteful manner.

He liked the lady well enough—but liking is not love—and though he knew her money would be of use, both to himself and the bank, those thousands, made out of oil, repelled rather than attracted him. Then there were the juvenile Jubbins—commonplace in mind and features, spoiled, delicate, antagonistic, to his perhaps over-fastidious taste. Though the Bloomsbury world, or that other world quite away from Bloomsbury, with which he still kept up a friendly intercourse, did not suspect the fact, he had long outlived the old attachment Mrs. Higgs and her daughter often talked about with bated breath.

He was single, not from any actual objection to the married state, or fancy for one especial

fair, but simply because no woman calculated greatly to delight so stern and cynical a judge of the sex had crossed his path. Possibly he was looking for perfection. If so, he had certainly as yet not found it. Upon the other hand, seeing that mediocrity and commonplace virtues are often supposed to form a very good embodiment of a higher ideal, it seemed really hard he could not please his father and delight Mrs. Higgs, and return Mrs. Jubbins' attachment and reward her constancy; but all this appeared to Mr. Gayre impossible. The more he thought the matter over, the longer he contemplated himself hedged in by City notions, surrounded by a mere moneyed clique, tied to the apron-strings of Bloomsbury gentility—travelling life's road in company with the men he had to meet in business, and acting the part of a model stepfather to the Jubbins brood—the more truly he felt that, putting all question of romance, or love, or the glamour which does encircle some women, totally aside, such a marriage was, for him, out of the question.

At the end of a year from the time his father first broached the subject he was still 'thinking the matter over,' after which period all necessity for him to think about it ceased—his father died.

For six months after that event, Mr. Nicholas Gayre, a wanderer here and there, debated what he should do with his life: then all in a hurry he made up his mind; sold the lease of the Brunswick-square house, took another in Upper Wimpole-street, removed the furniture, books, plate, and china left to him under his father's will, and, with the help of three old servants, soon found himself much more at home than had ever been the case since he left the army and took to banking.

It was about this time Mrs. Jubbins' hopes revived. During the period when, according to his father's desire, he had been thinking of the widow as his future wife, Mr. Nicholas Gayre's manners became quite unconsciously cold and distant to the constant Eliza. Now no longer bound by his father's old-world notions; free from the Bloomsbury servitude, wherein he had duly fulfilled his term; free to think and talk of other things besides money, and stocks, and investments, and commercial imprudence, and mercantile success; free, further, to marry whom he chose, or no one at all, Mr. Gayre grew quite amiable, and fell easily back into the familiar, though not close, intimacy which had marked his intercourse with the Jubbins family after his return from soldiering.

As a matter of course the good-looking Eliza took it for granted he would step into his father's place as adviser-in-chief concerning the Jubbins property.

The title-deeds, the scrip of all sorts, the shares, the trade secrets, were under lock and key in Gayres' strong-room. At Gayres' Mrs. Jubbins continued the account her husband formerly kept there. Had he felt curious about the matter, Mr. Nicholas Gayre might have ascertained almost to a penny what she spent, and how she spent it. There was nothing which pleased the lady so much as getting into a muddle, and being compelled to ask Mr. Gayre to help her out of it.

She made mountains of mole-hills in order to write notes to him, and, herself a most excellent manager and capital woman of business, tried to pass for one of the most incompetent of her sex. Mrs. Higgs died, and then, of course, Mrs. Jubbins needed ad-

vice more than ever. Two of her young people, spite of money and doctors and care, and everything which could be thought of to restore them to health, drooped and died. All these events retarded Mr. Gayre's proposal, no doubt; still, there were times when Mrs. Jubbins doubted whether he ever meant to propose. Had she known as much of the world as Nicholas, she would have understood friendliness is the worst possible symptom where a man's heart is concerned. Mr. Gayre had as much intention of proposing for one of the princesses as for the widow. Preposterous as the idea seemed in his father's lifetime, it seemed trebly preposterous now. He did not exactly know what she expected, though indeed he guessed; but he had long before made up his own mind that, so far as he was concerned, Mrs. Jubbins must remain Mrs. Jubbins till the end of the chapter.

A longer interval than usual had elapsed without his seeing her, when he turned his steps in the direction of Brunswick-square. As he approached the familiar door Mr. Gayre surveyed Mrs. Jubbins' residence with an amount of interest and curiosity he had never before experienced, and he certainly felt a sensation of pleasure at sight of windows clear as whiting and chamois and that other commodity, better than either, vulgarly called 'elbow-grease,' could make them, enamelled boxes filled with flowers on the sills, curtains white as the driven snow and of the best quality money could buy, spotless steps, polished knocker, and all those little etceteras which point to money, good servants, and a capable mistress.

'It is not Onslow-square, certainly,' thought Mr. Gayre, 'but we will see what we can do with it.'

'Now, this is really kind of you!' exclaimed Mrs. Jubbins—a handsome and well-preserved woman on the right side of forty—stretching out a white plump hand in greeting. 'You see, I am still unable to move,' she added, with a laugh which showed an exceedingly good set of teeth, pointing as she spoke to a stool over which a *couvre-pieds* was thrown, in the modestest manner possible. 'Why, it is quite an age since you have been here!'

'Yes, indeed,' he answered, in his suave decisive manner—'almost three months. I fear you have been suffering much anxiety. Why did you not send for me sooner?'

'Well,' she began to explain—'well—' Then, after a pause, 'I know you must have so many engagements.'

'None,' he answered, 'believe me, that could ever keep me absent if you said you needed my poor services.'

Mrs. Jubbins had been a bold child, but she was not a forward woman. Quite the contrary. Supposing she could have won Mr. Gayre by saying, 'Will you marry me?' he must have remained unwon for ever, and for this reason she did not take advantage of his pretty speech, but merely inclined her sleek head in acknowledgment, as she asked,

'Have you been able to go to Chislehurst?'

'Yes,' he said. 'And The Warren is a most lovely place.'

'Which you would advise me to take?'

'If you really wish to go out of town for the summer, certainly.'

'Tell me all about it, please,' and the Jubbins relict leaned back on the sofa, crossed her hands, and closed her eyes.

She was worth—heavens, ladies, how much was she not worth?

—and could consequently, even in the concentrated presence of Gayre, Delone, Eyles, and Co., lean back, cross her hands, and close her eyes to any extent she liked.

Mr. Gayre looked at her not without approval—looked at her comely face, her broad capable forehead, her straight well-defined brows, her wealth of hair—not combed over frizettes, a fashion then still much in favour, but taken straight off her face to the back of her shapely, if somewhat large, head, and there wound round and round in great plaits almost too thick and long even for the eye of faith.

Such hair—such splendid hair—as Mrs. Jubbins possessed, quite of her own and altogether without purchase, belongs to few women.

Mr. Gayre knew it to be perfectly natural. He had been well acquainted with it in his youth, and in his experienced middle age he could have detected a single false lock; but there was nothing false about Mrs. Jubbins. All she had was as genuine as her money, as the Spanish mahogany furniture which had belonged to her husband's grandfather.

'As to The Warren,' proceeded Mr. Gayre, 'it is simply charming. A cottage in a wood; but such a cottage, and such a wood! Lord Flint, it seems, bought about twenty acres covered with trees, cleared a space on the top of the hill, and built a summer residence for his bride. Shortly afterwards he succeeded to the earldom; but still spent some portion of each year at the cottage, laying money out freely on the house and grounds. He died last summer; and as the widow does not now like the place—whether she liked it when her husband was living, I cannot say—she wants to let it; so there the house, fully furnished,

stands empty for you to walk into, if you like.'

At the mention of a lord, Mrs. Jubbins, who dearly loved nobility, old or new, opened her eyes and assumed an upright attitude.

'A place of that sort would be too grand and fine for me,' she objected, in the tone of one who wished to be contradicted.

'It is not at all grand,' answered Mr. Gayre, 'and the furniture is not fine. I daresay it cost a considerable sum of money; but really everything looks as simple and homely as possible.' And then he went on to talk of the gardens, and grounds, and terraces, and woods, finishing by remarking, 'Though quite close to London, one might be a hundred miles away from town, the air is so pure and the silence so utter.'

For a few moments Mrs. Jubbins made no reply. Then she said, with a delighted little laugh,

'Only fancy me living in the house of a real lord—not a lord mayor, but a peer!'

'It is a very nice house for any one to live in,' observed Mr. Gayre, wondering, if she rented the residence, how often in the course of a month she would mention Lord Flint, and the Earl of Merioneth, and her ladyship the Countess.

'Who would believe it!' exclaimed Mrs. Jubbins. 'And yet, do you know, I think I must have been dreaming of something of this sort. I have had the strangest thoughts lately. Whether it is this lovely weather following the long dreary winter, or being kept a prisoner by my ankle, or what, I am sure I cannot tell; but often of late I have found myself wondering whether I was doing right in staying so much at home, and spending so little money, and making no new acquaintances, and continuing the same round from year's end to year's end, as

though Brunswick-square were the world, and no other place on the face of the earth existed except Bloomsbury.'

Mr. Gayre smiled, and hazarded the remark that neither of them ought to speak against Bloomsbury.

'No, that is quite true,' agreed the lady; 'but yet, you see, you have gone west, and everybody else seems going west, or buying places out of town, except myself. The Browns have taken a house in Porchester-terrace, the Jones have gone to Bournemouth.'

'And the Robinsons no doubt will follow suit,' suggested Mr. Gayre, forgetful that Mrs. Jubbins' circle of friends did include a family of that name.

'Yes, Mr. Robinson is building himself quite a mansion down at Walton-on-Thames, and they expect to be able to move in August. I tell her she won't like it—that there is no place on the Thames to equal London; but they all seem eager to go; after a time there will be nobody left in Bloomsbury but me,' and Mrs. Jubbins sighed plaintively.

'You will not be left if you take The Warren,' said Mr. Gayre.

'I can't stay at The Warren for ever,' she answered; 'I shall have to come back here some day, unless—'

'Unless what?' asked Mr. Gayre.

'Unless I sell the lease of this house, and make up my mind to remove altogether. I really think I ought to make some change. The children are growing up, and ought to be in a neighbourhood where they could form pleasant acquaintances. Bloomsbury is all well enough for elderly persons; and the tradespeople are very good; I don't think you could get better meat anywhere than Grist supplies; and though Ida is not strong, I fancy that is only natural

delicacy, and has nothing to do with the air. But still—'

'If I were you,' interrupted Mr. Gayre, who always waxed impatient under details that had seemed both instructive and agreeable to his father, 'I should take this Chislehurst place for a year; at the end of that time you could decide whether it would be best to return here, or remain on there, or buy a house at the West-end. What lovely flowers! How they transform this dear old room! It looks quite gay and bright—'

'They make a dreadful litter,' remarked Mrs. Jubbins, who was a very Martha in household details, though to hear her talk at times any one might have supposed Mrs. Hemans took a healthy and lively view of life in comparison with the buxom Eliza—'but they certainly do light up a house. The day before I sprained my ankle I went over to Porchester-terrace, and, dear me, I thought, what a difference between the West-end and Bloomsbury! When I came back our square seemed quite dingy; so I told Hodkins to arrange with some nurseryman to keep me supplied with plants. At first it did seem to me a dreadful waste of money, and I could not help wondering what your poor father would have said to such extravagance; but there, the world goes on, and one can't stand still and be left all behind, can one?'

'Gracious Heavens!' considered Mr. Gayre, 'if I had married her I should have been compelled to listen to this sort of thing all the days of my life;' then he said aloud, 'Talking of my father, I want you to grant me a favour; will you?'

'Certainly; need you ask? what is it?' And then Mrs. Jubbins paused abruptly, as the notion occurred to her that perhaps the

long-deferred hour was at last on the point of striking.

But Mr. Gayre's next words dispelled the illusion.

'You remember Margaret?'

Hot and swift the tell-tale blood rushed up into Mrs. Jubbins' face, and as she said, 'Yes; is she in London?' a duller but not less painful colour mantled Mr. Gayre's brow.

'I do not suppose Margaret will ever come to London,' he answered; 'but her daughter is here, and I should consider it a great kindness if you would pay the girl a little attention. You know—or possibly you do not know—what a miserable, hopeless, irreclaimable sinner the father is. His own relations have cut him adrift, mine will have nothing to do with him; consequently, through no fault of her own, my niece is, by both sides of the house, left out in the cold. I should like her to be intimate with a good sensible woman, such as you are; but perhaps I am asking too much.'

'Too much! I shall be enchanted to do anything in my power for Margaret's daughter. Is she like her mother, poor dear Margaret?'

'My sister was pretty,' answered Mr. Gayre, with a feeling of deep gratitude swelling in his heart for the friendly warmth of Mrs. Jubbins' manner. 'My niece is beautiful. Her face does not seem so sweet to me as Margaret's; but most persons would admire it far more. She is, in fact, so beautiful, so lovely, and placed in such a painful and exceptional position, that I shall not know a moment's peace till she is suitably married.'

'Dear, dear!' exclaimed Mrs. Jubbins; 'I would go to her this moment if it were not for this tiresome ankle. Could not she

come to me, though, Mr. Gayre? I am such an old friend of your family she might dispense with ceremony, and let us make acquaintance at once. If she spent a few days here, for instance, and then supposing I were to take Lady Merioneth's house, that would make a little change for her.'

'You are the kindest person in the world,' said Mr. Gayre, with conviction.

'No, indeed I am not; only think, you know, if it were one of my own daughters. I am sure I quite long to see the dear girl. What a thing for poor Margaret to be parted from her own child!'

'My niece believes her mother is dead, and there seems to me no necessity to enlighten her.'

'Ah! that makes it all the worse. When I remember—when I look back and recall her lovely face framed in those sunny curls—'

'Looking back is worse than useless,' interrupted Mr. Gayre, speaking hoarsely and with averted eyes. 'We cannot undo the past; the best plan is to act as prudently as possible in the present. That is why I ask your help, why I want you to look a little after the child of my unhappy sister.'

'And that I will,' declared Mrs. Jubbins heartily. 'It will be like having a daughter given to me in the place of my darling Clara; a daughter to think and plan for and love. How I long to see her! When do you think she can come here? Will you bring her? or shall I send a fly and Hodkins? You know he really is a most superior and respectable person.'

This time Mr. Gayre forgot to smile at Mrs. Jubbins' singular way of putting things.

'I will arrange the visit with my niece,' he said, 'and give you due notice when you may expect

to see us. I am a bad hand at returning thanks; but I feel your kindness more than I can express.'

'It is nothing,' she answered vehemently, 'nothing at all; it is I who am obliged. All my life I have been receiving favours from your family, and doing nothing in return. You have made me so very happy. I wonder if you would mind my consulting you concerning another little matter I could not avoid thinking about while tied to this sofa?'

'I am all attention,' Mr. Gayre declared. 'What is this matter? Are you thinking of setting up a carriage?'

'Well, you must be a wizard!' exclaimed Mrs. Jubbins. 'Do you know, often lately I have been wondering whether my poor husband and your dear father would think a single brougham and a very plain livery too great an extravagance. You see things have changed so much during the course of the last few years. There was a time when all one's friends lived close at hand; but now one must have a fly to pay visits; and really a carriage and coachman of one's own would not cost so very much more.'

'My dear Mrs. Jubbins,' said Mr. Gayre, 'you talk as if you had to economise upon five hundred a year instead of being obliged to starve on twelve thousand.'

'Yes,' she answered; 'but there are the children, and I do so want to be a faithful steward, Mr. Gayre, and justify the trust reposed in me. Yet there are two sides to the question, I am sure. Our fathers moved with their times, and, as a mother, I ought to move with mine; and that brings me to what I wished to say—not about the carriage, it can wait; but—'

'Yes?' said Mr. Gayre interrogatively.

'You must promise not to laugh at me.'

'I am very sure I shall not laugh at what you say.'

'Well, then, I have been thinking most seriously whether, if I take a house out of town—and the doctor says I must—it would not be a good opportunity for changing my name.'

'I beg your pardon?'

No italics could indicate the astonishment expressed in Mr. Gayre's tone.

'Are you thinking of marrying again?' he went on—severely, as the widow imagined, but really in a mere maze of bewilderment.

'No—O no,' she said hurriedly. 'It is not likely I shall ever marry again—I am certain I never shall; but I cannot blind myself to the fact that the name of Jubbins is in many ways a bar socially. Put it to yourself, Mr. Gayre—Jubbins! Awful! All the years I have borne it have never reconciled me to the name. Higgs was not beautiful, but Jubbins is worse.'

'“A rose by any other name would smell as sweet,”' quoted Mr. Gayre, resolutely refraining even from smiling.

'Not if it was called Jubbins,' answered the lady almost tearfully.

'Yes, it would,' persisted the banker; 'but whether or no, there are for the present, at all events, good and sufficient reasons why your late husband's known and honest name should be preserved. As you are aware, the formulæ for making those wonderful oils lie at our bank. When your sons come of age they will want to make use of them. The name is associated with the product. It is of actual pecuniary value. The De Vere Oil, for example, would

not command any market. I have always admired many traits in your character, but none more than your excellent feeling. Give that fair play now. Just think what the name you bear has done for you.'

'I know—I know.'

'And do consider that, although you have an undoubted right at any moment to change your own name by marriage, you really have no right to change the name of your children.'

'O Mr. Gayre, how good and clever you are! how clear you make everything!'

'And speaking for myself,' added the banker, warming to his subject, 'I can only say that, though I liked Miss Higgs much, I like Mrs. Jubbins more.'

'You *are* kind!' exclaimed the widow, while the colour once more fluttered into her face, and, spite of her declaration that she would never marry again, she began to consider such an event not quite impossible. 'What, must you go? Well, you have given me a great deal of your valuable time, and I am very grateful to you.'

She could not rise on account of that troublesome ankle, and, as Mr. Gayre held her hand while he spoke some words of thanks, he was obliged to stoop a little, and—unconsciously perhaps—fell into an almost tender attitude.

Mrs. Jubbins' heart beat so fast and so loud, she felt afraid he would hear it. The long-expected declaration must surely be hovering on his lips!

That was a supreme moment. Never before had he retained her hand so long; on the contrary, he had ever previously held it as short a time as possible. Never had he before regarded her with a look of such admiration; never had his tone been so low, or his words so earnest, or—

Just then a tremendous double knock—prolonged, ear-splitting, infuriating—resounded through the house. Was ever knock before so unexpected and so loud? Mrs. Jubbins gave a start, which almost threw her off the sofa. Mr. Gayre dropped her hand as if he had been shot.

And, after all, it was no one coming up; only Mrs. Robinson's card, and kind inquiries after dear Mrs. Jubbins' ankle. Mr. Gayre saw that card lying on a salver as he passed out, excellently contented with his afternoon's work, but, upon the whole, not quite so well satisfied with himself.

CHAPTER VIII.

FATHER, DAUGHTER, UNCLE.

'Is your father at home, Margaret?'

It was Mr. Gayre who asked this question. He had gone straight from Brunswick-square to North Bank, debating that matter of his own conduct all the way.

When he left the City he fully intended to have 'a few words' with his niece; but he did not feel his own hands quite clean enough at the minute to cast stones at her, and accordingly would have deferred the operation till a more convenient season but for the action taken by the young lady herself.

'Yes; papa has not gone out yet,' she said, in answer to his inquiry. 'I will tell him you are here;' and she left the room, but, changing her mind, returned almost immediately, and, closing the door, observed, with a confusion which for once was not feigned,

'I want to say something to you, uncle.'

'Say on then, my niece,' he returned.

But she hesitated, looking at him piteously for help, till at last he felt compelled to ask,

'Well, what is it?'

'Can't you guess?'

'Whether I can or not, I decline to do anything of the sort. Come, say what you have got to say, and let us be done with the matter.'

'It is—about—Susan Drummond.'

'Yes; what about her?'

For one moment Miss Chelston doubted whether he remembered, and lamented her own folly in not letting a sleeping dog lie; but the next she felt sure he could not have forgotten, and said,

'You must have thought it so odd that I did not tell papa I had seen her.'

'Did I? No, I do not think I did. I wonder now why you told him such a lie; but I presume you had some reason, good or bad, for not wishing him to know.'

'I was wrong,' she confessed, in a tone of the deepest humility; 'but indeed I acted from the very best motives.'

'It would be interesting to know what those motives were; but I suppose you won't tell me.'

'O yes, indeed—indeed I will; I have been longing to tell you. Susan and I are the oldest and dearest of friends—I may say she is the only friend I have in all the wide world. I understand her perfectly; and the reason I did not want papa to suspect she was in London—'

'Out with it,' advised Mr. Gayre.

'Well, you see, at the time I thought things would be different here. Papa told me we should have a great deal of company, and

that I would be asked out to parties and—and—all that sort of thing; and I knew, since her uncle's death, poor dear Susan could not afford to dress—as—as people have to dress if they go into society; and I thought asking her to come to us would only vex and place her in a false position.'

'Anything else?' suggested Mr. Gayre.

'Yes; but you must not be vexed with me. I do hate riding, and I was sure papa would be wanting me to go out with Susan; and I dare not—O, I dare not! That horse you so much admired almost frightened me to death.'

'You are quite sure you have nothing more to tell me?' said Mr. Gayre, as she came to a full stop.

'Quite sure—quite sure indeed.'

Mr. Gayre looked her over with an amused smile. She did not lift her eyes to his, but stood with them cast penitently downwards, waiting for any comments he might have to make.

'I think,' he began at last, 'there is some truth in what you have just been saying, but I fancy there is not much. Now let me give you a little advice. Don't try to hoodwink me. In the first place, it is a mere waste of time; and in the second, you will find it to your advantage to work with, instead of against, me. All I desire is your good. You are placed in a most difficult and exceptional position, and you have not so many friends you can afford to quarrel with any of them, more especially a girl like Miss Drummond.'

'Quarrel, uncle! I wouldn't quarrel with Susan for all the world; but how could I know living in London would turn out

so different from what I expected—so miserable?' ended Miss Chelston, with a gasping sob.

'You expected, perhaps, to be presented at Court?' hinted Mr. Gayre, with bitter irony.

'I did not think it was at all impossible,' she answered.

'And what do you think now?' he asked.

'That I have been very silly; and O, it's all such a dreadful disappointment!' and, covering her face with her hands, she left the room fairly in tears.

'It is hard on the girl,' thought Mr. Gayre, 'and why should I have expected straightforwardness from her? The father does not know the meaning of the word; the mother was a poor weak timid fool; and I—well, my friend, I don't consider you have much reason to be proud of yourself.'

'So you have sent Peggy off crying,' said the Baronet cheerfully, opening the door at this juncture; 'I am very glad of it. Hope you gave her a good scolding. As I told her yesterday—for I had an appointment after I got back from Enfield the other day, and was not home till long after she had gone to bed—as I told her, there is nothing in the world I detest like a falsehood. Let a man or a woman only speak the truth, and I do not much care how bad he or she may be in other respects, though no one who does speak the truth can be very bad.'

'I think we may let the affair rest now,' remarked Mr. Gayre. 'More particularly as Miss Drummond ought never to know Margaret's silence was other than a piece of carelessness. It will be a great matter for your daughter to have so nice a friend staying with her. Have you settled when she is to come?'

'Yes. Peg wrote her as pretty

a note yesterday as you'd wish to read. O, she was humble enough, I can tell you. It's not often I do come the stern parent business, but I did speak out. I said, "If you think because Susan has only got a poor couple of thousand pounds she is not as welcome to my house as though she had millions, you are very much mistaken, that's all. I'm sorely afraid, Peggy," I went on, "you're an arrant little snob; and you don't inherit that failing from me any more than your want of candour. No one can say I ever held myself aloof from any man because he was not rich or well-born. What's the use of being well-born if one can't shake hands with a beggar?" No, that girl of mine wants taking down. She does think so confoundedly much of herself.'

'It seems to me she has been taken down a great deal,' observed Mr. Gayre. 'She evidently came to London expecting to carry all before her; and, spite of your agreeable manners and large circle of desirable acquaintances, she finds herself alone in a great city, without a soul to speak to. However,' added Mr. Gayre hurriedly, to prevent his brother-in-law once again taking up his parable, 'I have at last succeeded in getting her one invitation, which I hope will lead to more. As we can't induce rank to notice her, I determined to try money. Mrs. Jubbins of Brunswick-square, a lady I have known all my life, will be delighted to do anything and everything she can for Margaret.'

'Come, that's encouraging,' exclaimed the Baronet, 'though Jubbins does not exactly seem a name one would find in *Burke*, and Brunswick-square is a little—eh?'

'If you mean that it is not Belgravia, you are right; but as

no duchess has rushed forward to chaperone your daughter, it may be prudent to try and make the best of rich respectability.'

'Why, my dear fellow, how you talk! Any one, to hear the way you go on, might imagine I was particular! Thank God, I am no such thing! I do not worship rank or money. And so your friends are very rich. What is the husband?'

'I don't know what he may be at present; he is dead; he was a most excellent person when living.'

'Widow! Bless me, why don't you make up to her, Gayre?'

'Well, there are several reasons. One, however, may seem sufficient. She says she is not going to marry again.'

'Pooh!' commented Sir Geoffrey, with airy incredulity.

'At all events, she has let seven years pass without making a second choice.'

'The right man has not asked her,' remarked the Baronet, with decision; and he shook his head with such emphasis that Mr. Gayre knew he was thinking of his wife 'gave him a chance,' and the fortune proved sufficient, he himself would attempt Mrs. Jubbins' conversion, and with brilliant success.

'She is a truly admirable woman in every relation of life,' said Mr. Gayre.

'I am thankful to hear it—most thankful,' answered Sir Geoffrey solemnly. 'What a fortunate fellow you are, Gayre, not to be saddled with the responsibility of a daughter! I declare the future of mine is getting to be a nightmare to me. What on earth would become of poor Peggy if I died?'

'It is extremely difficult to say,' observed Mr. Gayre, too wise to be entrapped into any promise by his simple brother-in-law.

'And we must all die,' pursued the Baronet tentatively.

'So it is said; but there is no rule without an exception, and you may prove that exception.'

Sir Geoffrey digested this remark, and, deciding he would not make much out of Mr. Gayre on such a tack, said, in a frank sort of manner, as if the idea had only just occurred to him,

'I really don't know that I should object to a City man as a husband for my girl if he could insure her a proper establishment.'

'It is extremely good and wise of you to say so.'

'You see I can give her no fortune.'

'And, as a rule, money expects money nowadays.'

'Upon the other hand,' proceeded Sir Geoffrey, 'she is my daughter.'

'So she is; that is a great advantage,' said Mr. Gayre.

For a moment it occurred to the Baronet that his brother-in-law was openly gibing him; but looking sharply up, he could see no hint of laughter in the calm, cold face.

'And a title must always carry a certain weight,' he ventured.

'But your daughter has no title, and as for yours—knights and baronets have in the City become somewhat of drugs in the market. What can Margaret, without a penny of dowry, do for any man? You have no property left for him to talk about. Your daughter has no social standing; she possesses the manners of a gentlewoman, I admit, and is extremely good-looking. Nevertheless—'

'For Heaven's sake, Gayre, don't make me more wretched than I am! It was my misfortune, not my fault, I didn't marry

into my own rank of life, in which case my relations *must* have seen to the girl. But as matters stand—'

'I think, Sir Geoffrey, I will wish you "good-afternoon,"' interposed Mr. Gayre, rising in hot wrath, and striding across the small room to the door, with the almost forgotten military gait.

But ere he reached it, Sir Geoffrey caught him.

'My dear, dear Gayre—' he began; and then, as his dear Gayre wrenched himself from his detaining grasp, and reached the hall, the Baronet, once again seizing his sleeve, went on, 'You have misunderstood me quite.'

Mr. Gayre, however, was not so easily to be appeased. Standing in the middle of the gravelled path, sheltered from the vulgar gaze by that high wall already mentioned, he delivered his parable. He rehearsed the righteous doings of the Gayres, and the sins of Sir Geoffrey.

'Good God!' he cried, and certainly, as a rule, Mr. Gayre was no profane swearer, 'if my father had liked he could have given you seven years' penal servitude over that matter of my sister's settlement. But he refrained; and yet now you talk as if you had made a *mésalliance* by entering a family able to trace a longer pedigree than your own.'

Through a little pantry-window, almost screened from the sight of visitors by a goodly arbor vitæ, Lavender watched the progress of this wordy war, saw Mr. Gayre's impatient and angry movement, and his master's deprecating gestures, and the humble and almost cringing servility of his manner.

'Sir Geoffrey's gone and done it now,' he considered. 'Ah! I knew it was too good to last. He'll be off in a minute more, and

I suppose we'll never set eyes on him here again.'

And indeed departure seemed imminent. Mr. Gayre had his hand on the lock of the gate, and, spite of Sir Geoffrey's efforts to detain him, was evidently bent on making his way into the road; but just as he had turned the handle, and was on the eve of leaving Mr. Moreby's borrowed villa for ever, Margaret, her eyes still a little red, but her dress as usual perfect—Margaret, with one rose in her hair and another in her girdle, looking fair and fresh, and pathetically humble, came round the end of the house, and exclaiming, 'O uncle! you won't go without a cup of tea,' changed her own destiny as well as that of others.

'You can't refuse *her*,' remarked Sir Geoffrey *sotto voce*. 'Upon my soul and honour, you took quite a wrong meaning out of what I said; and hang it, whatever I may be, she's your sister's child.'

'Have you two been quarrelling?' asked Miss Chelston, in quick alarm. 'Don't do that, don't—just too when I had made up my mind to be so good and nice and sweet to you both and everybody. Uncle, you mustn't mind papa. Really he was quite unpleasant to me yesterday. Papa, uncle, is in a bad humour: he scolded me half an hour ago till I had to go up-stairs and have a good cry by myself. Now come in to tea, both of you,' she finished, with a pretty, imperious, and yet caressing air which became her wonderfully, and caused Mr. Gayre to consider, 'After all, something may be made of her.'

'Come,' she repeated, taking Mr. Gayre's arm and leading him towards the house; 'and you may follow us, you bad man,' she went on, addressing her father, who, for answer, put his fingers within

the bit of black velvet she wore round her neck and gave it a twist.

Father and daughter did not exactly pull together, yet still, upon the whole, they understood each other pretty well.

Though the tea was lukewarm and extremely bad, Mr. Gayre swallowed one cup, exactly as he would have with some wild Indian smoked a pipe of peace. Sir Geoffrey refrained from partaking of the beverage offered for delectation, remarking his 'liver wouldn't stand it,' which, considering what he forced his liver to stand, seemed on the part of that organ an extraordinary act of rebellion; but he was good enough to go into the dining-room, and prepare a brew for himself that did not err on the side of weakness. This he drank a good deal faster than Mr. Gayre did his tea, while he drank communicating the good news of Mrs. Jubbins' invitation to his daughter, telling that young person she could never sufficiently prove her gratitude to the best of uncles, and, during the course of the conversation which ensued, artlessly inducing his brother-in-law to state many facts in connection with the state of the Jubbins finances he had not thought of imparting previously.

'By Jove, what a chance!' considered the Baronet; and then he proceeded to think, 'if her ladyship would only be kind enough to quit a world she never really adorned, I'd have a try for that quarter of a million—buried in the earth, as one may say—and I'd get it, or else know the reason why.'

Which only proves that even baronets may be liable to error. Sir Geoffrey thoroughly understood the weakness of human nature, but most certainly he failed to estimate its strength.

CHAPTER IX.

SUSAN.

SEATED in his library—a room which, in a bachelor's establishment, ever seems the pleasantest and most comfortable in the house—Mr. Gayre, on the evening of the same day when he fought Sir Geoffrey on his own ground, and felt, perhaps, ashamedly conscious of having led Mrs. Jubbins astray, or at least allowed her to stray, permitted his own soul the luxury of a day-dream. During the course of his life he had not indulged in many; and now and then a doubt would intrude as to whether anything could come of this vision, or if it would end like the others in grief and humiliation and disappointment. But in that quiet twilight hour doubt seemed exorcised. After all, why should happiness not be his? If in some things he had failed, in others he had succeeded; in no respect could he be accounted an unfortunate man. The stars in their courses had not fought against him as they did against Sisera. 'I ought to have no quarrel with Fate,' he thought, 'for Fate has done a great deal for me; and, perhaps,' he went on, contemplating his air-castle with an eye of faith, 'she has been keeping the great blessing of a good pure wife for the last.' Dreams, fair dreams! Were they only, after all, to be dreams? Was his day to end in darkness, unilluminated by the golden beams of a mutual love? Was life to hold nothing for him of the beauty and the glamour with which only a woman can shed over it? 'Ah, no!' he murmured; and through the gloom it seemed to him that a figure, clad all in white, came gliding to his side; that a delicate hand lay clasped in his; that a pair of tender brown eyes looked wist-

fully in his face ; that a soft touch smoothed the coming wrinkles from his brow ; and that at last, tremblingly, he clasped to his heart the wife he had waited through the long lonely years to meet.

Already he felt as if he must have known her always. They were strangers no more. He heard her speak, and her voice sounded familiar to him. She smiled, and the waters of his soul reflected back the pleasant sunshine.

Had they, in some former and happier state of existence, wandered side by side through flower-decked meads and winding leafy lanes, it could not have seemed more natural to him than it did to find himself pacing the never before trodden fields of Enfield Highway, in which the mowers were busy with their scythes, filling the air with the delicious perfume of recently-cut grass. Her little tricks of manner and speech and look and movement struck him with no sense of novelty.

'I must have been acquainted with Susan Drummond the whole of my life,' he decided ; 'that is to say, for a good many years before she was born.' Her very name sounded to him accustomed ; homelike seemed its simple melody. Susan—Susan—Susan—Susan Drummond, with her fair honest face ; with her hair, which was neither brown nor yellow nor red, but a marvellous mixture of all three ; with her exquisite complexion and sweet tender mouth—he recalled them all ; and yet each individual and to be particularised beauty faded into nothingness beside the intangible and indefinable charm which had its source no man could tell where.

Had she been smitten with smallpox, or lost a limb, or be-

come suddenly old, Susan would have been Susan still. There are women who retain, whether in youth or age, some subtle and inexplicable essence of womanliness as far beyond analysis as the scent of a rose. Whatever the fashion of the earthly tabernacle her soul inhabits, nevertheless from the windows of even the poorest habitation some passer-by catches the glimpse of a countenance never for ever to be forgotten.

Mr. Gayre at all events felt he could not, while life lasted, forget riding along the Green Lanes and through Southgate, and thence, by many devious roads, into Enfield Highway.

'Are you quite sure where you're going, Gayre?' asked his interesting brother-in-law Sir Geoffrey, whom he had seduced into setting off on a wild-geese chase after a fellow who owned a wonderful hunter on the London side of Waltham.

'No, indeed, I am not,' answered Mr. Gayre despondently ; 'but I mean to inquire about my man at each public we pass.'

Which performance, greatly to the Baronet's satisfaction, was gone through duly and truly with negative success, till the pair reached a certain hotel, noted in the old days, that still did a roaring trade by reason of excursionists to the Rye House and Broxbourne Gardens.

'Does I know a gemman as owns a 'ansome bay 'unter? Why, in course I does—Squire Temperley, of Temperley Manor. But, Lord love you, sir, it ain't of no manner of use riding on to see 'im! 'E's been away—let's see—a matter of three week with the gout, which do nip him up sore.'

Mr. Gayre mused. It was not his fashion to rush into dialogue.

'What sort of looking man is your Squire?' he asked at length,

while he slipped half-a-crown into his informant's hand.

'Well, sir, 'e's not unlike yourself in build and figure, only 'eavier and a trifle more advanced in years'—Mr. Gayre winced; 'a very pleasant gemman, and most out and out rider; didn't mind taking in 'and any 'oss—got the most splendid 'unter to be seen in all these parts—a regular wild one; no person can to say really ride 'im but 'imself and young Mr. Arbery.'

'Young Mr. Arbery? Who is he? not Squire Temperley's son, of course?'

'No, sir; Mr. Arbery is the son of Mrs. Arbery, Granston 'Ouse, just above 'ere. 'E's just back from the Australies, and we 'aven't seen yet the 'orse could throw 'im.'

Having with a commendable pride finished which statement, the ostler, whose manners happened to be of a more free-and-easy description than obtained in Lombard-street, was good enough to 'throw his eye over Mr. Gayre's steed,' and remark 'she was a tidy sort of beast, who I dessay can go.'

'Well,' asked Sir Geoffrey, coming out of the bar, where he had been taking something 'just for the good of the house,' 'have you dropped on your friend's track yet?'

'Yes, I think so,' answered Mr. Gayre; and having received some further information on the exact position of Granston House, the pair departed, only walking their horses up the Great North Road, but nevertheless eliciting an observation from the ostler that 'he hoped he might be blanked if those gents didn't know something about riding.'

On they went past the church and into the older part of the village, which even so late as 1874 was little more than a mere strag-

gling street. They had got into the region of a few unpretentious shops, when Mr. Gayre started so suddenly that his mare sprang forward with a bound which elicited a profane inquiry from Sir Geoffrey as to 'what the —— ailed the —— brute.'

His brother-in-law did not answer. Apparently he was devoting his whole attention to 'the —— brute,' but in reality his eyes were following two persons who chanced to be sauntering slowly along the footpath; one was a lady wearing a white straw hat and piqué dress of the same colour, both trimmed with black ribbon; the other the young fellow he had seen in the Park.

He had found his quarry, and yet, though he passed the pair so close that he could almost have laid his hand on Mr. Arbery's shoulder, he did not pull up and accost him.

Shyness was a fault from which, as a rule, the banker might be considered perfectly free; but at that moment he felt it impossible even to turn his head in the direction of the very persons he had come to seek.

Not so Sir Geoffrey. That woman must indeed have been old at whom he would have failed (to use his own expression) to take a squint; and, following his usual practice, he proceeded to honour with a hard stare a girl whom he had already decided possessed 'a deuced good pair of ankles;' then,

'Lord bless my soul!' he exclaimed, in a tone loud enough for all the village to hear, 'if it isn't Susan Drummond!' and Mr. Gayre, at last looking back, beheld Sir Geoffrey standing in the middle of the road, with his horse's bridle slipped over his arm, shaking both Miss Drummond's hands, and expressing his delight and wonder-

ment at meeting her in such an out-of-the-way place so volubly that he was well-nigh unintelligible.

'Gayre, Gayre,' he cried, 'stop a minute—this is Susan; Susan Drummond, you know. By Jove, who'd have thought of coming across her here! Susan, this is my brother-in-law; gad! I never was so surprised in all the days of my life! What in the world are you doing in Enfield Highway?'

Watching her, Mr. Gayre saw a shadow of disappointment creeping over her face, lit up the instant before with a delighted smile of pleasure.

'Did not Maggie tell you I was here?' she asked.

'How should she know?' demanded the Baronet.

'Why, I saw her one day in Hyde Park, about a month ago; didn't she tell you?' repeated the girl.

'Not a word; if she had you may be very sure I'd have been down here before now. I—' and Sir Geoffrey was about to plunge into the whole story of Peggy's statement that she didn't know even the address of her old friend, when a look from Mr. Gayre arrested the words on his tongue.

'You know what a careless forgetful baggage it is,' he said, with great presence of mind, 'and how much fonder she always was of telling things to other people than her own father; however, now I've found you, I won't lose sight of you again; you must come over and see Peg, and have all out with her. Come and pay us a long visit.'

But Susan made no answer except, 'You are very kind, but you always were kind to me, Sir Geoffrey.'

'Papa Geoff,' amended the Baronet. 'Where are you stopping? who are you with? what are you

doing? I am amazed. Who'd have thought of seeing you here?'

'There is nothing remarkable in seeing *me* here,' she answered, 'but it is astonishing to see you. I should just as soon have expected Chelston Church spire coming up Enfield Highway as you. What can have brought you to this part of the world?'

'My brother-in-law wanted to find some fellow about a hunter—' Sir Geoffrey was beginning, when Mr. Gayre interposed.

'This is the very gentleman I wanted to see, I think,' he said, looking towards Mr. Arbery, who had stepped into the background. 'As I did not know your name,' he went on, speaking to Miss Drummond's companion, 'we have had a great deal of trouble in finding out who you were and where you lived.'

'Well, it's all right now, isn't it!' exclaimed Sir Geoffrey. 'Susan, my dear, I am so glad we came; you can't think how pleased I am to see you again.'

'This is my cousin, Mr. Arbery,' she said, acknowledging the Baronet's hearty words with a smile which chased the shadows from her face; and then, with a pretty grace, she introduced him to Mr. Gayre, which ceremony duly performed, they all walked on together to Granston House, where the young man said his mother would be delighted to see them.

It is more than doubtful whether Mrs. Arbery was anything of the kind; nevertheless, she received the unexpected visitors with a good grace, and asked them to stop and take early dinner.

'We always dine early,' explained Will Arbery; 'but you can call it luncheon;' and then, while Sir Geoffrey was making himself agreeable to Mrs. Arbery,

whom he afterwards spoke of as 'shaky—deucedly shaky,' and Susan left the room, probably to add a few touches to the appointments of the dinner-table, Mr. Arbery and Mr. Gayre talked, not merely about Mr. Temperley's hunter, but other equine matters.

At the meal to which they all subsequently sat down the conversation was general. It turned a good deal on Australia, and Mr. Arbery, who found much to say, and said it well, interested Mr. Gayre considerably with his account of life on a great sheep-run. He had three brothers settled in Australia, and one sister—all married. 'So, when I get back,' he added, 'there will be five of us out there, old married folks. If we could only induce my mother to come too, we should be as happy as possible.'

Mr. Gayre looked at Miss Drummond, who smiled amusedly in reply, while Mrs. Arbery said, 'I shall never cross the sea,' in a tone which told the banker this was a sore subject in the family.

'But 'pon my soul,' exclaimed Sir Geoffrey, 'it seems to me a splendid idea. Why can't we all go? What do you say, Susan—will you pack up and let us leave England together?'

'No,' she answered; 'like my aunt, I never mean to take so long a voyage.'

'I have asked her already, and she refused me,' declared her cousin.

'That is very true, Will,' she said; 'but perhaps, if you had implored me to share the sheep-run instead of helping to catch wild horses, my answer might have been different.'

At which they all laughed—Mrs. Arbery a little sadly, Mr. Gayre with a sense of relief, Sir Geoffrey delighted to find his old

favourite 'as saucy as ever,' and Will Arbery after the fashion of a person who felt himself fairly hit.

'No, Susie, it wouldn't,' he said, looking at her with fond, but merely cousinly, affection. 'You are far too much of a "bloated aristocrat" for Australia; you like purple and fine linen, and servants, and regular meals, and nice furniture, and—'

'I like civilisation, if that is what you mean,' she summed up. 'I think a sheep-run in Cumberland or Wales, or even Ireland, might be all very well; but I confess I should not care for it a thousand miles from a post-office.'

Hearing which declaration Mrs. Arbery sighed deeply, and Mr. Gayre drew his own conclusions. He understood there sat the wife Mrs. Arbery would have liked for her son, and he could not exactly understand why 'cousin William' had elected to go further afield, till a few weeks afterwards, when Susan was good enough to enlighten him.

'I don't fancy,' she said slyly one day, 'men usually fall in love with a woman because their mothers think the particular "she" will make a good daughter-in-law.'

After dinner they went out on to the lawn, which was perched high over the road, and where the whole 'way' might have watched them promenading had it chosen; then they wound round the house to a pretty trim flower-garden, laid out in the Dutch style, and from there Susan, and Mr. Gayre, and Sir Geoffrey, and young Arbery strolled down the pleasant meadows, in which the grass was being cut and the hay being made.

A stream bordered by pollards meandered at one side of the fields; large Aylesbury ducks

were disporting themselves in the water. Afar off, beyond the level marshes, rose the rising ground, near Sewardstone and Chingford. There was a great peace as well as a great silence in the air, and it seemed to Mr. Gayre as if suddenly he had left some old life of unrest behind, and entered a land where trouble could not enter.

Even Sir Geoffrey assumed quite a different aspect sauntering through those Elysian Fields with his hat off, discoursing learnedly with young Arbery about country affairs, or turning to speak to Susan as she and Mr. Gayre lagged behind.

'You wouldn't like to jump that stream now, would you, Susie?' he asked, as they came to a standstill at one particular bend of the river.

'No,' she laughed. 'I do not feel so young as I did once, and besides, this is wider than the Chell was at the Pleasaunce.'

'I am not so sure of that,' said the Baronet, surveying the sluggish water dubiously. 'Well, perhaps you are right. Lord, Lord! shall I ever forget that day when I was out in the Long Meadow looking at Lady Mary—do you remember that chestnut filly, Sue?—the prettiest thing, the very prettiest!—seeing you come tearing down the green walk, with Lal Hilderton behind you, racing like two mad things! I shouted out to you to mind the river; but you just gathered your skirts about you and took it like a deer. Gad, I never saw a patch upon it before or since! And, afterwards, you stood mocking Lal, he on one side, and you on t'other.'

'He did not follow, then?' suggested Mr. Gayre.

'If he had, he'd have pitched right in the middle of the water. Lal was no jumper.'

'Ah, but couldn't he paint, Sir Geoffrey?' said Susan, with just the faintest mockery of an Irish accent as she uttered a completely Irish sentence.

'Yes, certainly he was clever with his pencil,' agreed Sir Geoffrey.

'And who was this Mr. Hilderton?' asked Mr. Gayre, feeling really he could contain himself no longer.

'O, an old neighbour,' answered Susan carelessly. 'He was intended for the Church, but preferred art, and went to Rome to study. For the credit of Chelston, we hope he will be a great man yet. About three years ago he was good enough to come down to see us aborigines, and caused quite a sensation in a velvet suit and a red tie.'

'And all the ladies fell in love with him, I suppose?' said Mr. Gayre bitterly.

'I think a good many did,' agreed Miss Drummond. 'He really is very handsome.'

What a strange girl!—one who spoke of men and life and wooing and marrying as if she were seventy years of age; who addressed the representative of Gayre, Delone, Gayre, and Co. as if she had frisked and frolicked about Chelston Pleasaunce with him! How frightfully easy were her manners!—well, perhaps not so easy as indifferent; and yet—and yet who was the one woman who, since that crazy fancy of his youth, had ever seemed winsome to him.

Already he loved her distractingly; already he felt, on the slightest provocation, madly jealous. The first six words she spoke had not disenchanted him—quite the contrary. She was different from the girl he expected—stronger—a woman better worth loving and winning—a woman

such as, in all his previous experience, he had never before met, and—

‘I think, Gayre, we must be seeing now about getting back to town,’ said Sir Geoffrey, who, fond though he might be and was of Susan, felt the pastoral business, unenlivened by champagne and the hope of a dupe, wonderfully slow.

To this proposal Mr. Gayre at once assented. He felt that, whatever his own wishes might be, he and the Baronet could not stay at Granston House for ever; and accordingly, declining young Arbery’s hospitable suggestion that they should stop and have tea, and ride home in the cool of the evening, it was finally settled their horses were to be saddled and taken to the back gate, where Susan undertook to pilot the visitors in ten minutes.

‘The back gate is really the carriage-gate here,’ she explained; ‘only we have no carriage, and nothing in the stable, except a cow and a donkey.’

Killing that ten minutes—a process which Sir Geoffrey thought occupied about ten hours—they paused beside a Marshal Niel which ran over the drawing-room window.

‘Give me a rose, Susie,’ said the Baronet; and then, as she complied, added: ‘Give Gayre one too. Now,’ he went on, ‘you must fasten it in my coat, in memory of old times. What jolly little buttonholes you used to make up for me at Chelston! Only look at Gayre—see what a mess he is making of the performance. Better let Susie take your rose in hand.’

Now, the fact was that Mr. Gayre had never in all his life worn a flower in his coat. Affecting a severe simplicity, he eschewed jewelry, perfumes, button-

holes, and every vanity of latter-day male life; but not knowing what on earth to do with the rose Susan had given him, feeling he could not go about dangling it in his hand, he was, when Sir Geoffrey spoke, vainly attempting to coax it to stay in his left-hand lapel.

‘Will you really take pity upon me?’ he asked; and the blood came up into his face as he put this question.

‘O, certainly!’ said Susan; and, while fastening the stem, she looked up at him, blushing too, but with a merry light in her brown eyes.

‘Gad,’ exclaimed Sir Geoffrey, complacently surveying his decoration, ‘they’ll think along the road we’ve been to Broxbourne Gardens!’ a remark which induced such an expression of disgust on Mr. Gayre’s countenance that Susan laughed outright, and explained the correct form of bouquet generally borne home in triumph from that place of gay resort.

‘What people will imagine, Sir Geoffrey, is that you must be a great rose fancier, and are returning from Paul’s at Waltham,’ she said; which suggestion of his brother-in-law being mistaken for a florist so tickled Mr. Gayre’s fancy that, his good-humour quite restored, he joined in Miss Drummond’s merriment.

‘You are a bad, bad girl!’ declared the Baronet, pinching her cheek. ‘Come, now, before we leave, you must tell me what day I am to drive over for you.’

Then instantly Susan’s manner changed. She didn’t know; she was afraid she could not go; perhaps Margaret might be able to arrange to run down by train and spend a day with her: excuses Sir Geoffrey cut short by saying decidedly,

'Now look here, my girl, no use our beating about the bush; you're huffed, that's what you are, but you needn't be. Peggy will be only too glad if you'll come and stop with us—not for a night or two, remember, but on a long visit. She's just as lonely a girl as you would find in London, and she has not a friend on earth she likes as she does you. Of course, you know, we are down in the world a bit, but you cannot be the Susan I know if that makes any difference.'

'I was sure the poverty touch would fetch her,' he said afterwards to Mr. Gayre; and it did 'fetch' Miss Drummond so far as to induce her to say 'she would try to go and see Maggie,' if that young lady would write and name an hour when she should be likely to find her at home.

'I think I did that pretty well,' remarked the Baronet, as he and his brother-in-law rode straight down the wide Highway to Edmonton, cheered by Mr. Arbery's parting assurance that whichever road they took back they would fancy the longest. 'I think I did that pretty well, considering we had nothing but water at dinner. How people can drink water, as if they were beasts of the field, beats me altogether.'

'If you were on the march, and couldn't get any, you might change your opinion.'

'I might,' said Sir Geoffrey, in a tone which implied he did not think such a change very likely.

'However,' he went on. 'I am going to stop here for a minute to "bait;"' and, suiting the action to the word, he rode up to the door of the inn, where he had previously partaken of spirituous refreshment, leaving Mr. Gayre to walk slowly on and admire the prospect of flat country which

alone met his eye, look where he would.

'I feel another man now,' declared the Baronet, when he overtook his brother-in-law. 'Well, you haven't told me yet what you think of Susan.'

'She seems a very nice girl,' answered Mr. Gayre, coldly as it seemed to Susan's enthusiastic admirer.

'Nice! I believe you. There's not a dark corner about her. I've known her—how long haven't I known her?—the dearest little woman! I used to think it was a pity I could not harness her and Peggy when they were children; such a pair they'd have made—Susie in blue shoes, and my young one in red; blue and red sashes, blue and red necklaces to match; and later on, while Peg was posturing before a looking-glass—if you believe me, from six years of age she was always putting flowers in her hair and smiling at her own reflection—Susie would be out in the paddocks with me, or sitting in the dining-room while I told her stories.'

'Stories!' repeated Mr. Gayre in amazement, wondering what sort of fairy-tales the Baronet's repertory contained.

'Yes, stories,' said Sir Geoffrey defiantly. 'I don't mean, of course, nursery-tales or foolish stuff such as most children are crammed with; but good sensible stories about duels, and races, and shooting, and spins across country—things likely to improve her mind. Lord, how she used to drink them in! holding her breath almost till we got to the end of a run, and holding the arms of her chair with both hands, and well-nigh gasping as I told her about flying over hedges and taking bullfinches, and all the rest of it. She'd never have been what she is if it hadn't been for me.'

One evening I made a great mistake. I don't know how I happened to get upon Dick Darrell, who was the hardest rider and the wildest devil I ever did come across. He was going to be married and settle down, and the young woman was stopping at Darrell Court with the father. Dick thought he'd have a burst with the hounds; and if you believe me, when I came to where at the last fence he went clean over his horse's head and broke his neck, Susan fell to crying to such an extent my housekeeper wouldn't let her go back to the Hall that night. Ay, it seemed a hard thing to take Darrell home stiff; such screaming and weeping and wailing I never heard—the old man childless and the bride a widow, as one may say.'

'What became of the bride, as you call her?' asked Mr. Gayre, with some interest.

'O, she stayed to comfort the Squire; and comforted him to such purpose they made up a match between them.'

'I thought as much,' remarked his brother-in-law sardonically. 'Where's your rose, Chelston?'

'Faith, I don't know,' answered the Baronet, glancing at his coat, and for the first time noticing the flower had disappeared. 'I must have knocked the head off as I was mounting this fidgety beast.'

Mr. Gayre smiled, but said nothing. On the whole he was not perhaps displeased that Sir Geoffrey had lost Marshal Niel, as he had already lost the whole of his other possessions.

Seated in the twilight there, it was of Susan Drummond, and Enfield Highway, and fields of emerald green, and a blue sky just flecked here and there with snow-white clouds, and the air filled with the fragrance of new-mown hay, that Mr. Gayre thought, as he dreamed his day-dream, and built fancy castles with towering pinnacles that glittered in the sun. Why should he not win and wear her? Why should he not marry and be happy? Why should she not come stealing to him through the gloom, and fill his empty heart, and change his lonely life into one of utter content?

She was young, very young, no doubt; and he was old—yet not so old, after all. She was poor, and he was rich enough to give her all he fancied she could desire. Women had figuratively torn caps about him; why should he despair of awakening an interest in Susan Drummond? She had no lover—he felt sure of that; quite sure the depths of her nature had never yet been stirred.

The twilight deepened; it grew so dark he could not see the objects surrounding him; and yet he dreamt on, till suddenly the door opened, and an old servant, who had been with him 'through the wars,' said,

'Mr. Sudlow, Colonel, wishes to know if he can see you.'

'Yes,' answered the 'Colonel,' coming back to earth and its realities. 'Ask him to walk in; and bring lights and coffee.'

(To be continued.)

ART AT THE GROSVENOR, 1883.

It is now twelve years since Alma Tadema, his strong claim to artistic distinction already established and acknowledged abroad, as well in France and Belgium as in his native country of Holland, came to settle in England, thenceforward his country by adoption. From the famous 'Pyrrhic Dance' that first introduced him to his future countrymen at the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1869 down to the 'Antony and Cleopatra' of 1882, second to no work in the present Grosvenor collection, the intervening years have been years of incessant productive activity on the part of the painter, and of steady corresponding advance in fame, with a public that, in particular, had reason for duly prizing his peculiar merits. Extraordinary technical excellence and singleness of artistic aim such as his were the more conspicuous for their greater scarcity among us. Furthermore, the manliness of his conceptions, nay, a certain austerity in their sentiment, were congenial to the spirit of a nation proverbially serious, even in its pleasures. Yet to a large proportion of this public, the spectacle afforded this winter of over a hundred and fifty of his compositions gathered together in one place, has come somewhat like a revelation, as to the calibre of the artist and the scope of his art. The present collection is far from being complete. It will be enough to name the brilliant 'Spring Festival,' the impressive original 'Fredegonda'—the triple panel representation in water-colour of

three scenes out of that queen's tragedy—'Down by the River,' and 'Sappho,' among the larger and more important of the absentees, the recent masterly painting of the 'Duchess of Cleveland' among the portraits. As for those smaller compositions about which both fools and wise men are agreed, the artist's store seems practically inexhaustible. Little bits of crystallised beauty and delight, after the possession of one of which your soul hankers, such as the 'Garden Altar,' the lovely gracefully-draped girl, with flowing hair under her evergreen wreath, striking her tambourine as she dances before the sacred flame; or her neighbour and rival, the 'Torch Dancer,' her fair head crowned with white blossoms, leopard-skin flung round her, whilst she bounds wildly among the rose-leaves that strew the ground at her feet; or 'A Mirror,' where the young beauty bends over the marble fountain to meet her own likeness, with no witnesses but the columns and cypress-trees beyond. The same hand has painted of such as many again as this room contains, and at least of equal charm. However, the exhibition is quite comprehensive enough to be representative. It has indubitably raised the painter's already high reputation, enhancing that popularity which the equably-minded artist neither goes out of his way to seek nor affects to shun. Such a result was in this instance inevitable. A painter whose work is thorough, and owes nothing to trick or mannerism,

has nothing to fear from an exhibition of this sort. Not that when a vast quantity of the same handiwork is put before you at once, you are seeing it under ideally favourable conditions. But what here are the difficulties in the way of forming a fair estimate and deriving the full impression the artist intended to convey, compared with those that beset you at the Royal Academy, where the mass of the public hitherto has had to make acquaintance with these compositions? Artistic pleasure pure and simple is a commodity the most sanguine visitor can scarcely look to obtain from the fashionable exhibition of the year, harassed as he is there by a swarm of intrusive conflicting impressions. The more receptive and sensitive his mind, the greater the obstacles to abstraction, the more distressing the ordeal. Not to mention the crowd and bustle, and a certain restless, inartistic, society-journal, moral taint pervading the air, and that would infect the veriest recluse, there are over a thousand works of art to be skimmed each season; there is your disinterested anxiety to ascertain if your young friend's picture has been hung, or has escaped being skied; there are the claims on your attention of 'pictures of the year,' rather notorious than meritorious, but about which not to know argues yourself a novice; this work that was alluded to by a speaker at the Academy dinner, this curious product of an Academician who, in his dotage, has set himself to teach the young idea how not to paint. Then the popular beauty sits there on a sofa, to invite comparison with her portrait opposite, and divide your attention with it. Add to this the vicinity of a great quantity of bad art, too glaring in colour for its disturbing influence to be es-

caped; and those occasional freaks of (ill) nature on the part of the hanging committee—the juxtaposition of good pictures, that clash, as good things will sometimes, and that seem to have been thus pitted against each other expressly to murder our enjoyment of each, by their over-violent contrast in sentiment or handling. The yoking together of Mr. Millais's brilliant but showy 'Cinderella' with the severity of Mr. Tadema's 'Sappho' looked like a practical joke on the part of authority, and was, indeed, hard to account for in any other way. Moreover, every eight or ten years brings a whole new public into existence for a painter. How many of the observers that throng the Grosvenor of 1883 were boys at school when, in 1871 and 1874 respectively, the 'Roman Emperor' (No. 32 in the present exhibition) and 'The Picture Gallery' compelled the admiring notice of every intelligent visitor to Burlington House? Thus the art-critic in our leading journal believes 'The Picture Gallery' to be now exhibited for the first time in this country, and post-dates 'A Roman Emperor' by six years!

An artist like Mr. Tadema needs no favour, but he needed a fair field; and the collection now on view, by showing society at large what he could do and was doing, has helped to dispel some popular illusions concerning him. The world had grasped the fact that he was an indefatigable painter of scenes of Roman life. Amid the flurry and confusion of the Academy, our eyes had lingered pleasurably on the mosaic pavements, the columns of red and black porphyry and giallo antico, the statuary, reliefs, sculptured fountains so prominent in his work. As a painter of marble he

was, on the whole, incomparable. Hence to the conclusion that he could paint nothing else, so as to make us care about it, may seem a startling leap; but it is made without hesitation by the bold and agile mind of the omniscient amateur. We magnanimously accredited the artist with learning, research, and precision of detail; we took for granted what we could not deny—his combined powers of design, draughtsmanship, and colour; yet we did not associate his productions with qualities that give universal pleasure, with the poetry, beauty, and feeling indispensable to win the suffrages of that *vox populi* which has a certain Divine infallibility about it, indispensable to place an artist in the front rank. The catchword 'archæological painter' answered to the idea in our minds, and as an archæological painter he was classed in our judgments, and spoken of accordingly with a sort of tacit implication that it showed no want of soul not to care greatly for archæological painting, quite the contrary—and that for our part we did not. A visit to the Grosvenor of necessity modifies preconceptions of this sort. The visitor is soon caught by a fascination it needs no deep antiquarian lore, or special enthusiasm for Greece and Rome, to perceive. You pass from the richly-coloured 'Egyptian in his Doorway' to the lifelike, energetic 'Pyrrhic Dance,' thence to the 'Fête Intime,' and 'The Vintage,' that make you glad with those vine-chapleted men and maidens rejoicing, uplifting the purple grapes, making holiday with pipes, and cymbals, and timbrels; or 'The Siesta,' where the idlers are reposing in the heat of noon, whilst the flutes play and the roses lie scattered on the table; you are charmed by that exquisite little

piece 'Fishing,' the beautiful girl erect on the marble landing, with fluted columns behind her; around her the water with its growth of cool green reeds, and lilies, crimson and white, floating on the surface at her feet, and the birds of prey flying in to snatch their share of the spoil; charmed again by 'Hide and Seek' and 'A Pastoral,' the young Roman returning from the sacrifice at the temple of Apollo, leading the yoked bullocks in his cart, the flute-player coming down the hill behind him through the fields gay with spring flowers. If this be archæological painting, you admit yourself converted to the same. It is not what you meant to imply by the term. True, there is a kind of boisterous beauty, a readily-apparent poetry and sentiment, after which Mr. Tadema never seems to strive. But love of beauty in nature, human nature, and art, is the ground 'motif' of almost all of these pictures; and you begin to suspect the fault was yours, if, in your haste, you apprehended their significance imperfectly. Probably it was the distinctly poetical temperament of the man that tempted his imagination—restricted by his Dutch origin, we will suppose, to subjects in actual fact—to seek these in a land and a time whose poetry and whose prose were more picturesque than our own, and to depict the feasts, the music, the loves, the homes, the joys and sorrows of the ancients, rather than of the present familiar age, vulgarised as familiar life is and must be by associations, a stumbling-block, often fatal, in the way of its receiving the purest and best artistic treatment. Pictorial art of the highest has mostly been exhibited in scenes removed from the society of the painter's own time. Apelles painted the

heroic mythology, Raphael the School of Athens, the sacred history of Christ, Madonnas, and saints. Mr. Tadema's Dutch ancestors were content to exercise their high skill on tavern brawls and kitchen dressers, to reproduce the boorish life of the boors among whom they lived. He, imposing on himself a similar faithfulness to reality, selects from the real what seems to him better worth commemoration, the beauty and serenity of Nature, of refined, high-cultured life under a southern sky. An earthly paradise of sunlight, blue sea, and love; of marble terraces and balustrades; gardens where white Hermæ gleam among roses, poppies, and sunflowers; richly decorated interiors, where gracefully toga'd, sandalled, fillet-crowned men and women live and move; reclining on embroidered silk cushions and couches, whispering love on marble resting-places open to the sun and air, sipping wine out of shining silvery bowls, weaving wreaths, bathing in rose-leaves—garland-sellers on the stairs of the Capitol, ivy-wreathed Baccanti slumbering on leopard-skins—nobles and artists contemplating their bronze and stone statuary: here are creations that add to our pleasure, not only to our information. We are lifted out of the present; and whilst the positivism in us is satisfied by the rigid historical accuracy of the particulars, our poetic sympathies are stirred by the perception of the loveliness in these scenes, and refreshed by their strangeness and novelty. Human life is the same in all ages, no doubt, but with a difference. We see here these Roman dames and girls playing with their pets, feeding their gold-fish, playing games, boating, and so forth, just as we might ourselves. But the spirit is far removed from the rest-

lessness, the 'fever and the fret' of our own time. It is in the union in these representations of ideal serenity, calm beauty, with realistic exactitude of detail in each special instance, that lies their peculiar charm and strength. These Roman and Græco-Roman genre pictures, preponderating greatly over the others in number, have come to be regarded as the painter's line *par excellence*. But the term 'genre-painter' is quite inapt for him. 'The Death of the First-born,' a composition whose interest is very much deeper, does not stand alone; but alone would suffice to prove that the author, if an archaeologist in the second place, is a master of pathetic expression in the first.

The first painting in the list that strikes the visitor is the interesting portrait of the artist by himself, at the age of sixteen, on the threshold of his art-studies. The quiet resolution, force without fever, that characterise the face, are full of the promise, whose significant fulfilment appears in the picture close by, 'The Education of the Grandchildren of Clotilde,' which, nine years later, first brought him into notice. Whilst showing his special abilities as a colourist as yet undeveloped, his draughtsmanship still unequal, it contains the primary ones of power, originality, and thoroughness, evidence of a remarkable mind, as well as of a skilful hand. Full performance is reached ten years later in the celebrated 'Roman Emperor,' and sustained, to say the least, in 'Agrippa' and 'Fredegonda,' through another decade to the recent 'Antony and Cleopatra.' If it were permissible to regret anything that has had this work for its latest consequence, it would be that absorption in the study of classic subjects has withdrawn the

painter's mind from the early mediæval world, no less picturesque, that had once such an attraction for him. Even these Franks, barbarians though they were, came nearer to ourselves in their loves and their hates, their sports and their vengeance, than the luxurious, pleasure-seeking Romans of the Empire—nearer to us northerners, that is. It is in Italy among the Italians that we must seek a direct link between the spirit of Mr. Tadema's pictures and the present day.

His art enthusiasm appears in his constant choice of themes from artistic life; and his conspicuous success here is the more remarkable, as few manage to impart to subjects in this special line a general interest. He has done so in two of the finest works here on view, the 'Picture Gallery' and the 'Sculpture Gallery,' no less pleasing to the general spectator than to the connoisseur. We have among the smaller compositions Phidias exhibiting the frieze of the Parthenon to the notables of Athens, the rapt architect poring over his design, the sculptor working at his colossal Phœbus; and the 'Improvisatore,' the last more modern in sentiment, weird in its effects of keen cold moonlight and black shadows. The absorption of the musician in his song, of the listeners in themselves and their emotions, is powerfully rendered and very true to nature. In the 'Sculptor's Model' the dominant sentiment is rather a devout artist's 'cult' for beauty than a more human feeling, which is perhaps the reason why Mr. Tadema's 'Venus' has never been generally popular. There is no more perfect type of his work among the Roman series than the 'Audience of Agrippa,' with its excellence of elaborate design, harmonious colouring, and dignity

of sentiment. 'Ave Cæsar! Io Saturnalia' is a *tour de force* in every way. The garlanded imperial busts, the variegated pavement on which the fallen Caligula lies, the Ionic columns behind, the soldiery, and curious observers pressing forward, are so many marvels of minute painting; but no less remarkable are the dramatic expression and skill in composition—all this compressed into a space seventeen inches by seven. It gives, as it were, the concentrated essence of the style of art which the painter has made peculiarly his own. Mr. Tadema's rigid adherence to material truth is nowhere more evident than in his portraits. They are mostly unsparing likenesses. The slight idealisation in feature or otherwise which portrait-painters usually strive after he denies to his sitters. In return he doubles their characteristic expression. This in every case he catches with the utmost certitude; what his models fail to gain in beauty he accords them in intelligence; and as the flattery of portrait-painters seems generally to entail increased rapidity of expression, Mr. Tadema's subjects scarcely lose by his method.

From the realist stand-point, Mr. Tadema has been accused of giving us too much of the roses and raptures, the refinements and sunshine, of Roman life, and ignoring its darker features. However this may be—and we earnestly hope the artist may never be converted to the heresy of ugliness-worship now rampant—it is observable that in all his highest attempts the subject is sad, even sombre. Those fated Frankish boys Clotilde would train to vengeance; the speechless grief of Pharaoh over his son; the beginning of the end of the Roman Empire; the brooding of the be-

trayed *Fredagonda*—all are in a minor key. In all these the highest effect and expression has been reached without the conveying of a painful physical impression. The success of these ambitious conceptions is as remarkable as their execution, and all left to be desired is that Mr. Tadema should one day bethink him of adding to their number.

In passing to the interesting array of landscapes by Mr. Cecil Lawson, the visitor who has come to the gallery with the rational object in view of getting as much enjoyment out of it as he can will do well to resist the almost irresistible demon that suggests comparison. It is but a few years since Mr. Lawson made his mark among us. He was but thirty when he died not a twelvemonth ago. He has certainly left behind a good deal of work we should be sorry to lose, and the qualities present in it warrant the belief that the artist, had he lived, would have acquired those that are now found wanting. No one has ever accused Mr. Lawson of lack of poetical sentiment. If this plays too little prominent a part in Mr. Tadema's pictures, it is here even too paramount; that is to say, bent on giving form to an indefinite feeling, the painter often dangerously disregarded the technical conditions of his art, and has thus laid himself open to a torrent of adverse criticism not easy to confute. His handling is rough, his tints impure, his boughs ill-drawn, we are told; he has imitated the tones in the faded dingy landscapes of *Salvator Rosa* and inferior Dutch masters. But granting all this, what is left unquestioned is of rare value. One is reminded of the Positivist who denied the existence of the soul in his explanation of the universe. Cross-questioned, tested,

perplexed, driven into a corner, he was constrained to admit that—matter apart—there yet remained in his theory 'a sort of a something.' Deny every merit that you can to these landscape paintings or poems, there is left uncontested an element which, like that 'sort of a something' the soul, is all-important. Mr. Lawson's poetical quality is essentially attractive.

The note he loves to strike has no great variety. Moonlight memories, effects of rain and mist, for the most part, his pictures show rather a great apiritual sensitiveness to the obviously poetical aspects of Nature than a genuine observation of her works and ways. 'The Minister's Garden'—prove the outlines faint, the painting flat and tapestry-like, if you will—has pleasurable qualities sure to preserve for it that place in popular estimation it won in 1878. 'Strayed,' 'A Pastoral Trafalgar-square,' 'The Pool,' the sketches in Cheyne-walk, and other striking landscapes and London lyrics and pastorals, are characteristic of the thoughtful townsman who dreams of green pastures in Piccadilly—perhaps a little of Piccadilly in green pastures. Less successful is 'The Hop Gardens of England,' indeed, for some cause, the beauty of our hop-fields has never had anything approaching justice rendered it in art. 'The Voice of Cuckoo,' taken as a whole, is virtually undefended, even by the painter's warmest admirers. The figures of the two children impress us each time we come back to them as an unpleasant surprise; and it is a pity that the work is included in a collection in which no other example happily is open to such serious condemnation. 'The Storm Cloud,' 'The Wet Moon,' 'Twilight Gray,' on the other hand, show us Mr. Lawson at his best

—a standard, we doubt not, he would have maintained and raised had time and experience been accorded him. There is something peculiarly English in this landscape-painter's compositions which endears them to us. They are English, as are Goldsmith's Vicar, Gray's 'Elegy,' and Currer Bell's pictures of wild, wet, windy moors, of which we are more than once reminded here.

Although of the two artists brought under our notice in the Grosvenor this winter Cecil Lawson has passed away from among us, and Alma Tadema is not a native, it none the less speaks well for the art future of England that she should have produced the former among her sons and enrolled the latter among her subjects.

THE SPARROW :

A Song for the First of March.

WHEN aged Winter, hoary king,
Low drooping on his frozen throne,
Sore smitten by the rebel Spring,
With failing gripe scarce holds his own ;
When, wrapt in garb of cheerless gray,
The Morning walks through chilling mist,
Yet wears a cheek of brighter ray,
Like one whom stronger suns have kist :
First harbinger of summer sheaves,
The Sparrow chirps beneath the eaves !

When pitcher-laden down the west
The Water-bearer wends his way,
And, sporting in unnatural air,
The gleaming Fish usurp his sway ;
While yet the blackbird's voice is dumb,
And thrush's many-tuned throat,
And redbreast robins no more come
To cheer us with their wintry note :
First harbinger of summer sheaves,
The Sparrow twitters 'neath the eaves !

When winds are veering round to east,
And lambs have all the shepherd's heart ;
When snowdrops woo the pale earth's breast,
And tell that waning snows depart ;
When forth from coffin underground
The buried crocus breaks aflame,
And that sweet nymph makes later round
Whom 'twixt the day and night we name :
First harbinger of summer sheaves,
The Sparrow calls beneath the eaves !

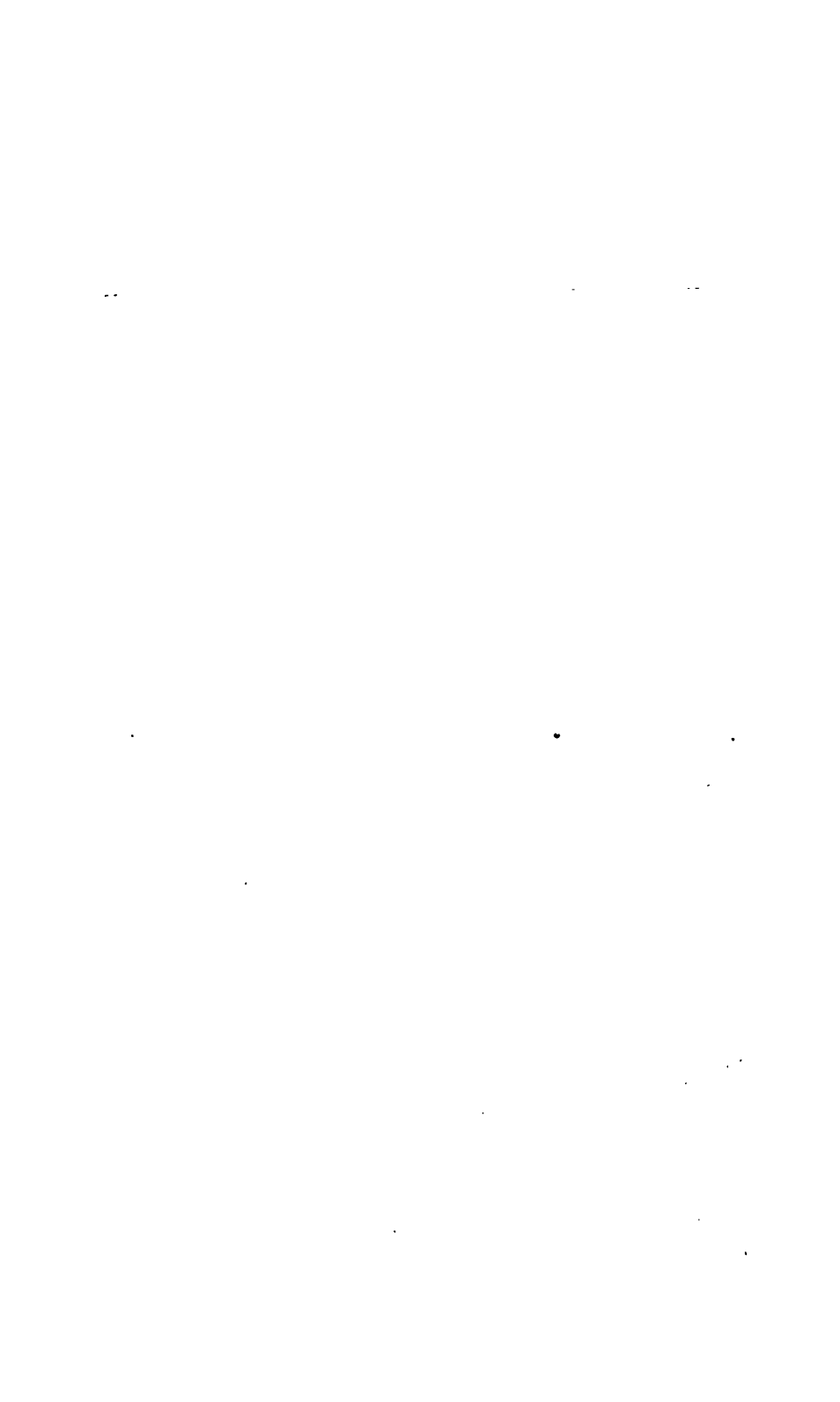
PEAKE BANTON.



THE LATE CECIL LAWSON (ARTIST).

DIED JUNE 11, 1882, AGED 30.

[From a Sketch by his Brother, WILFRID LAWSON.]



ANECDOTE CORNER.

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY H. T.—ALAN MUIR—J. PALGRAVE SIMPSON—
CHARLES HERVEY—EDWARD DRURY—SURGEON-GENERAL COWEN—
WILLMOTT DIXON—H. BARTON BAKER—THE ANECDOTE HUNTER—
THE EDITOR—AND OTHERS.

A Lucky Author.

THE following anecdote is so marvellous that I should not venture to submit it to the Editor of 'Anecdote Corner,' if I had not received it from a relative of the popular author, who became in so mysterious a manner the fortunate recipient of such unexpected wealth.

Most novel-readers have heard of the nautical novels of *Rattlin the Reefer* and *Outward Bound*, written by Mr. Howard. They first appeared between forty and fifty years ago. The first-named novel was edited by Captain Marryat, and became very popular. On one occasion Mr. Howard received an anonymous letter requesting him to be at a certain spot some twelve miles from London, and he would hear of something to his advantage. He com-

plied with the request, and the only satisfaction he received was the sight of a carriage and pair which drove away at his approach. Mr. Howard received a second letter, when the same result ensued. He vowed he would not be imposed on a third time. But his confidence was not again put to the test, as he shortly afterwards received a letter containing Bank of England notes for thirty thousand pounds! To the day of his death he never discovered the name of the mysterious donor. Mr. Howard married the daughter of the celebrated 'Publicola,' whose caustic writings contributed so materially to found the fortunes of the *Weekly Dispatch* half a century ago, under the proprietorship of the late Mr. Alderman Harmer.

H. T.

Two Anecdotes of 'Publicola.'

DAVID WILLIAMS (the celebrated 'Publicola'), being on one occasion at an assembly, observed that whenever he approached a group of people, they were all seized with violent fits of sneezing, and to such an extent that he speedily left for home in dudgeon. On relating the case to his sister, she laughed, and pointing to his dress-hat, made of beaver, said, 'Therein lies the explanation. To avoid any danger from moth, I peppered the hat well.' Publicola remembered he

had, in the course of conversation, waved his hat about, and also struck his person with it, and so caused the peppery particles to escape.

Williams was once at an evening-party in company with Theodore Hook. One of the guests preserved a strict silence, no matter what might be the subject of conversation. Theodore advanced and said, 'If you are a fool, you are a wise man; if you are a wise man, you are a fool.'

'BOERHAAVE,' says Johnson, 'was never soured by calumny and detraction, nor ever thought it necessary to confute them; for, said he, they are sparks which, if you do not blow them, will go out of themselves.' And, says Cato, 'We cannot control the evil tongues of others, but a good life enables us to despise them.'

A True Story from Somerset House.

IN a certain office under the Crown, it was found necessary many years ago to employ a staff of foreign examiners, in order to translate the documents which were submitted in support of certain charges. An old German was seated with one of the Commissioners, renowned for his piety and courteous speech. The Commissioner pointing to a name on the

list, inquired what had become of him. The German replied, 'O, he is dead, and gone to h—ll.' The Commissioner, horror-struck, replied, 'My dear sir, you must not speak of him in that way.' 'Never-a-mind,' said the German, 'never-a-mind,' then in a mysterious and emphatic whisper he added, 'You wait—some day you will see!'

Not Too Far Gone.

ONE evening John Scott (Lord Eldon) had been dipping rather too deeply into the convivial bowl with a friend in Queen-street, Edinburgh, and on emerging into the open air his intellect became in a considerable degree confused. Not being able to distinguish objects with any degree of certainty, he thought himself in a fair way of losing the road to his own house

in Picardy-place. In this perplexity he espied some one coming towards him, whom he stopped with this query: 'D'ye ken whaur John Scott bides?' 'Whaur's the use o' you speering that question?' said the man; 'you're John Scott himsel.' 'I ken that,' answered John; 'but it's no himsel that's wanted—it's his house.'

Confess your (Neighbour's) Sins.

DURING the days when the Tractarian controversy was yet in its early fever, and the particular phrases of the Roman Catholics were in everybody's mouth, an old village woman, of a loquacious and canting habit, was very anxious to prejudice the mind of her clergyman against her next-door neighbour, Sarah Williams, for Sarah Williams received more of parish doles than this talkative old religionist thought proper. 'Auricular confession ain't right, sir,

is it?' the wily old woman asked her parson, searching him with her keen eyes as she spoke. 'It certainly is not, Mary,' he answered. 'I thought not,' she replied, nodding her head. Then, her face gleaming with her malicious purpose, she went on, 'I was thinking yesterday, sir, that if auricular confession *were* right, I could tell you things about my neighbour, Mrs. Williams, that would make you open your eyes.'

A. M.

REMEMBER that if thou marry for beauty, thou bindest thyself all thy life for that which perchance will neither last nor please thee one year; and when thou hast it, it will be to thee of no price at all; for the desire dieth when it is attained, and the affection perisheth when it is satisfied.—SIR W. RALEIGH—TO HIS SON.

Farce and Tragedy at the Bar.

WE are indebted to the *Globe* for this good story of the famous Maître Lachaud:

The correspondent of a German journal gives some of his recollections of the deceased Maître Lachaud. He thinks that the famous advocate was the greatest master of comedy in France, and says that not a few eminent actors envied him his marvellous mimic powers. He was once employed to defend a murderer, against whom the facts were hopelessly clear. When his pathetic appeals and his tears—which were always at call when he pleaded before a country jury—failed to touch his stolid audience, he resorted to the most impudent piece of broad farce. Thrusting his moistened white handkerchief into his pocket, he demanded if the jurors were men, if they had human hearts, if they could bring themselves to condemn a fellow-man like the accused, whom he had credited with all sorts of knightly, if not saintly, merits. His eloquence was not merely fruitless,

but the jury responded to it at first with uneasy shuffling, then with biting of lips, and finally with loud and uncontrolled bursts of laughter. Lachaud, while flinging about his hands, had intentionally dipped his fingers into the great ink-pot in front of him, and, as he drew his right hand across his forehead, as if in an agony of despair at the certain fate of the accused, he left upon his brow an enormous black mark like a crescent moon, and drew other black traces down his cheeks as he put his fingers to his eyes to dash away his tears. Feigning high moral indignation at their conduct, he continued, 'You are about to decide whether one of your fellow-men shall be thrust by you out of the ranks of the living; and you choose such a moment for indulging in cruel and thoughtless laughter. Is this extravagant mirth a fitting mood in which to decide whether a man shall or shall not die?' The argument actually told upon the jury. The man was acquitted.

Two Anecdotes of 'Lord Dundreary.'

MR. E. A. SOTHERN, the celebrated Lord Dundreary, was invited to two houses in one evening. One entertainment was a party of 'grown-ups,' the other of children. Sothern considered it would be a capital joke if he entered the drawing-room full of children on all fours, and pretended to be a bear. When the footman announced Mr. Sothern, the actor carried out his intention, to the no small amaze-

ment of the assembled guests. He had mixed up the two houses, and found himself in the centre of wonder-stricken 'grown-ups.'



Sothern gave a dinner-party one evening to about a dozen men. One of the guests, whom we will call Thompson, was late. They had just sat down to their soup, when a loud ring announced the

IF falsehood had, like truth, but one face only, we should be upon better terms; for we should then take the contrary to what the liar says for certain truth; but the reverse of truth hath a hundred figures, and a field indefinite without bound or limit.—MONTAIGNE.

arrival of the late Mr. Thompson. Sothern hastily exclaimed,

'Let us all get under the table. Fancy Thompson's surprise when he beholds a long table devoid of guests.'

Sothern's love of practical joking was well known, so that the company were not astonished at the proposition, and in a couple of seconds every man was concealed from view beneath the table. Sothern made a half dive, then resumed his place at the head of

the table. Thompson entered, stared, and exclaimed,

'Hallo! where are all the fellows?'

Sothern shook his head in a lugubrious fashion, and in melancholy tones replied,

'I can't explain it, my dear fellow; but the moment they heard your name, they all got under the table.'

The expression on the faces of the hoaxed guests as they slowly emerged, one by one, from their concealment, can be better imagined than described.

Before 'Cram' was King.

IN the days when George IV. was king, entrance to the ranks of the Civil Service was not fenced round with the educational impediments at present existing. A candidate was asked on one occasion, 'Do you know French?' 'No, sir.' 'Never mind. Twice two?' 'Four.' 'That'll do.' The cere-

mony of swearing in had to be gone through in those remote days. The Commissioner inquired, 'Do you understand French?' 'No, sir.' The Commissioner turned round to the examiner. 'How is this, sir?' He replied, 'It is only his modesty, sir.' The candidate passed.

Charles Mathews' Footman.

ONE warm summer day Mathews had a dinner-party at Highgate. There were present, among others, Broderip, Theodore Hook, General Phipps, Manners Sutton (then Speaker of the House of Commons), and Charles Kemble. Dessert was laid out on the lawn. Mathews, without hinting his intention, rang the bell in the dining-room, and on its being answered, told the man to follow him to the stables, while he gave the coachman certain directions in his presence. The instant Mathews reached the stable-door he called to the coachman (who he knew was not there), looked in, and be-

fore the man-servant could come up, started back, and in a voice of horror cried out, 'Good Heavens! go back, go back, and tell Mr. Kemble that his horse has cut his throat!' The simple goose, infected by his master's well-feigned panic, and never pausing to reflect on the absurdity of the thing, burst on to the lawn, and with cheeks blanched with terror roared out, 'Mr. Kemble, sir, you're wanted directly!' Seeing Mr. Kemble in no hurry to move, he repeated his appeal with increased emphasis, 'For Heaven's sake, sir, come; your poor horse has cut his throat!'—*Memoir of Charles Mayne Young.*

MEN talk in raptures of youth and beauty, wit and sprightliness; but after seven years of union, not one of them is to be compared to good family management, which is seen at every meal, and felt every hour in the husband's purse.—*Anon.*

*'They didn't know everythin' down in Judee.'**

GINERAL B. is a sensible man;

He stays to his home an' looks arter his folks;

He draws his furrer ez straight ez he can,

An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes;

But John P.

Robinson, he

Sez he wunt vote for Ginerel B.

My! ain't it terrible? Wut shall we do?

We can't never choose him, o' course—that's flat:

Guess we shall hev to come round (don't you?),

An' go in for thunder an' guns, an' all that;

Fer John P.

Robinson, he

Sez he wunt vote for Ginerel B.

Ginerel C. is a drefle smart man:

He's been on all sides that give places or pelf;

But consistency still was a part of his plan—

He's been true to *one* party, and that is himself;

So John P.

Robinson, he

Sez he shall vote for Ginerel C.

Ginerel C. goes in for the war;

He don't vally principle morn 'n an old cud;

What did God make us raytional creeturs fer,

But glory an' gunpowder, plunder an' blood?

So John P.

Robinson, he

Sez he shall vote for Ginerel C.

We're gettin' on nicely up here to our village,

With good old idees o' wut's right an' wut ain't;

We kind o' thought Christ went against war and pillage,

An' that eppyletts worn't the best mark of a saint;

But John P.

Robinson, he

Sez this kind o' thing's an exploded idee.

The side of our country must ollers be took,

An' President Pulk, you know, *he* is our country;

An' the angel that writes all our sins in a book

Puts the *debit* to him, an' to us the *per contry*;

An' John P.

Robinson, he

Sez this is his view o' the thing to a T.

* We embalm in 'Anecdote Corner' this famous squib by the American Minister. It forms part of the 'Bigelow Papers.'

SATIRE is a composition of salt and mercury ; and it depends upon the different mixture and preparation of those ingredients that it comes out a noble medicine or a rank poison.—JEFFREY.

Parson Wilbur he calls all these arguments lies ;
 Sez they're nothin' on aith but jest *fee, faw, fum* ;
 An' that all this big talk of our destinies
 Is half on it ignorance, an' t'other half rum ;
 But John P.
 Robinson, he
 Sez it ain't no such thing ; an', of course, so must we.

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heered in his life
 Thet the Apostles rigg'd out in their swallow-tail coats,
 An' marched round in front of a drum an' a fife,
 To git some on 'em office, an' some on 'em votes ;
 But John P.
 Robinson, he
 Sez they didn't know everythin' down in Judee.

Wal, it's a marcy we've gut folks to tell us
 The rights an' the wrongs o' these matters, I vow—
 God sends country lawyers an' other wise fellers
 To drive the world's team wen it gits in a slough ;
 For John P.
 Robinson, he
 Sez the world'll go right, ef he hollers out Gee !

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

'Hear, hear !'

SHERIDAN once succeeded admirably in entrapping a noisy member who was in the habit of interrupting every speaker with cries of 'Hear, hear !' Richard Brinsley took an opportunity to allude to a well-known political character of the time, whom he represented as a person who wished to play the rogue, but had only sense enough to play the fool. 'Where,' exclaimed Sheridan, in

continuation and with great emphasis, 'where shall we find a more foolish knave or a more knavish fool than this ?' 'Hear, hear !' was instantly bellowed from the accustomed bench. The wicked wit bowed, thanked the gentleman for his ready reply to the question, and sat down amid convulsions of laughter from all but their unfortunate subject.

The Nomination of President Lincoln.

THE night previous to the meeting of the Convention at Chicago, Mr. Lincoln did not get home until eleven o'clock. In the morning Mrs. Lincoln, who was of a most amiable disposition, remonstrated with her good man

at breakfast. She kindly but firmly informed him that politics were leading him into bad habits, keeping late hours, and drinking at the rum-shops ; that she did not like it ; she had to sit and keep the children up ; and 'Now,

THE proverbial wisdom of the populace at gates, on roads, and in markets instructs the attentive ear of him who studies man more fully than a thousand rules ostentatiously arranged.—LAVATER.

Abraham, let me tell you that to-night I will go to bed at ten o'clock. If you come before that hour, well and good; if not, I will not get up and let you in.' Ten o'clock came that night, and, true to her word, Mrs. Lincoln went to bed with her children. About an hour later, Mr. Lincoln knocked at the door. He knocked once, twice, and even three times, before an upper window was raised, and the nightcap of a female looked out. 'Who is there?' 'Me.' 'You know what I told you, Abraham?' 'Yes; but, wife, I have got something very particu-

lar to tell you. Let me in.' 'I don't want to hear. It is some political stuff.' 'Wife, it is very important. There is a telegraphic despatch, and I have been nominated for the Presidency.' 'O Abraham, this is awful! Now I know you have been drinking. I only suspected it before; and you may just go and sleep where you got your liquor;' and down descended the window with a slam. True enough, the next day confirmed the news that the best anecdote-teller of the village had really been nominated President.

A Definition of Taste.

JAMES BOSWELL called upon me at my chambers at Lincoln's Inn, desiring to know what would be my definition of taste. I told him I must decline informing him how I should define it, because I knew he would publish what I said would be my definition of it, and I did not choose to submit my definition of it to public criticism. He continued, however, his importunities in frequent calls, and in one complained much that I would not give him my definition of taste, as

he had that morning got Henry Dundas's (afterwards Lord Melville), Sir Archibald Macdonald's, and John Anstruther's definition of taste. 'Well, then,' I said, 'Boswell, we must have an end of this. Taste, according to my definition, is the judgment which Dundas, Macdonald, Anstruther, and you manifested when you determined to quit Scotland and to come into the South. You may publish this if you please.'—*Lord Eldon's Anecdote Book.*

Counting the Cost.

A GOVERNOR-GENERAL of India, in days of yore, once entertained a Maharajah at a grand ball, at which were present all the upper ten thousand of Calcutta. The Indian prince, who had never before gazed on dances of 'Europe muster,' as the phrase goes, was delighted at the spectacle; and, on taking his leave of his host, said, 'Your Excellency's tamasha

(fête) has found favour in my eyes—much favour; and I, your father, would be too much pleased to return the same compliment to you, my son. Tell me, my lord, at what place can I seek out and order all these lovely houis of dancing-women and handsome young nautch-men, and how many rupees does their master charge per head?'

WE bring into the world with us a poor, needy, uncertain life, short at the longest, and unquiet at the best ; all the imaginations of the witty and the wise have been perpetually busied to find out the ways how to revive it with pleasures, or relieve it with diversions ; how to compose it with ease, and settle it with safety. To some of these ends have been employed the institutions of lawgivers, the reasonings of philosophers, the inventions of poets, the pains of labouring, and the extravagances of voluptuous men. All the world is perpetually at work about nothing else, but only that our poor mortal lives should pass the easier and happier for that little time we possess them, or else end the better when we lose them.—SIR W. TEMPLE.

Anecdotes of Foote.

MURPHY was repeating to Foote some remarks by Garrick on Lacey's love of money, as a mere attempt to cover his own stinginess by throwing it on his fellow-patentee, when it was asked why on earth Garrick didn't take the beam out of his own eye before attacking the mote in other people's. 'He is not sure,' replied Foote, 'of selling the timber.'

At the Chapter Coffee-house, Foote and his friends were making up a subscription for the relief of a poor player, who was nicknamed the Captain of the Four Winds, because his hat was worn into four spouts. Each person of the company dropped his mite into the hat as it was held out to him. 'If Garrick hears of this,' exclaimed Foote, 'he will certainly send his hat.'

Foote was generous to his actors, and much liked by them ; and he was much more considerate and business-like than some of his habits would lead one to suppose. An actress complained to him one day of the low salary she had from Garrick at Drury Lane ; on which Foote asked her why she had gone to him, knowing the salary she might have had

at the Haymarket. 'O, I don't know how it was,' she said ; 'he talked me over so by telling me he would make me immortal, that I did not know how to refuse him.' 'Did he so, indeed ?' said Foote ; 'well, then, I suppose I must outbid him that way. Come to me, then, when you are free ; I'll give you two pounds a week more, and charge you nothing for immortality !'

'There is a witty satirical story of Foote,' says Johnson. 'He had a small bust of Garrick placed upon his bureau. "You may be surprised," said he, "that I allow him to be so near my gold ; but you will observe he has no hands."'

One of Foote's pleasantries upon paying debts occurs in his comedy of *The Lame Lover*, in which one of the characters, Sir Luke Limp, tells this story : One morning, a Welsh coachmaker came with his bill to my lord, whose name was, unluckily, Lloyd. My lord had the man up. 'You are called, I think, Mr. Lloyd ?' 'At your worship's service, my lord.' 'What, Lloyd with an L ?' 'It was with an L, indeed, my lord.' 'Because in your part of the world I have heard that Lloyd

MYSTERY IN LANGUAGE.—All noble language-mystery is reached only by intense labour. Striving to speak with uttermost truth of expression, weighing word against word, and wasting none, the great speaker, or writer, toils first into perfect intelligibleness, then, as he reaches to higher subjects, and still more concentrated and wonderful utterance, he becomes ambiguous—as Dante is ambiguous—half a dozen different meanings lightning out in separate rays from every word, and here and there giving rise to much contention of critics as to what the intended meaning actually was. But it is no drunkard's babble for all that, and the men who think it so at the third hour of the day do not highly honour *themselves* in the thought.—JOHN RUSKIN.

and Floyd were synonymous—the very same names.' 'Very often indeed, my lord.' 'But you always spell yours with an L?' 'Always.' 'That, Mr. Lloyd, is a little unlucky; for you must know I am

now paying my debts alphabetically, and in four or five years you might have come in with an F, but I am afraid I can give you no hopes for your L. Ha! ha! ha!'

'Never go to France except you know the Lingo.'

A YOUNG Englishman found himself seated at dinner next to a pretty and vivacious French damsel, to whom, by mistake, the butler had given no bread. Said the gentleman, innocently enough, 'Voulez-vous partager mon pain, mademoiselle?' 'Il faut d'abord, monsieur, que je demande la permission à maman,' replied the

lady. The Englishman wondered why materfamilias need to be consulted in so simple a matter as sharing a roll; but was presently informed that he had put his foot into it, as 'partager mon pain' meant in French nothing more nor less than house, home, and wedlock. He left France next day.

A Sensible Sultan.

THE theatre of a certain French provincial town was once in the very depths of impecuniosity, its company unpaid, and nigh upon starvation—all save the manager himself, whose versatile imagination and ready wit enabled him to obtain credit and fare well. One night, however, a clever 'utility man' managed to get a capital supper out of him, and to eat it on the stage itself. The piece being represented was Voltaire's *Bagaget*. There is a speech in it, where the Grand Vizier expresses in high-flown language his utmost attachment to Bagazet, and offers to sacrifice fortune and life to his

person. Great was the astonishment and amusement of the audience on hearing from the lips of the bejewelled and glittering Sultan—personated by the 'utility man'—the following *tag*, addressed to the Grand Vizier, played by the manager:

SULTAN. Are you indeed so devoted to me?

VIZIER (*somewhat taken aback*). Bismillah, on my head be it if I show it not! (*Sotto voce*: What the deuce do you mean by this trash? Get on with the part.)

SULTAN (*not taking the least notice of the whisper*). Well, then, most faithful servant and friend,

CEREMONIES differ in every country ; but true politeness is ever the same. Ceremonies which take up so much of our attention are only artificial helps, which ignorance assumes in order to imitate politeness, which is the result of good sense and good nature. A person possessed of these qualities, though he has never seen a court, is truly agreeable ; and if without them would continue a clown, though he had been all his lifetime a gentleman usher.—OLIVER GOLD-SMITH.

I'll test you ! Send forthwith to the nearest cookshop for six sous' worth of fried potatoes ; for Allah is good, and knows that I have had no dinner to-day, and, by the Prophet, am hungry.

The audience roared, and would

not allow the piece to proceed until the tricky manager had procured from a close adjoining restaurant a *recherché* dinner, which they forced the willing and famished Sultan to eat under their eyes.

A small Distinction with a great Difference.

NAPOLEON III. once paid a visit to Baron Rothschild, who, having done his very best to entertain his imperial guest, and received encomiums of his satisfaction, cancelled his Majesty's obligations by the simple error of substituting the masculine for the feminine French article. Said the Baron, when thanking Napoleon for the

honour of his visit, 'Dont je garderai toujours le mémoire.' As our readers know, the word *mémoire*, when masculine, means *the bill* ; when feminine, *the recollection* ; so that Rothschild gave it to be understood that he held a pecuniary claim upon 'the nephew of my uncle' for bed and board.

A New and Happy Definition.

THE other day a certain foreign countess was interrogating her son's tutor as to Young Hopeful's progress in his studies.

'How gets on the viscount?' said she. 'Wonderfully well, my lady ; we are working hard at the sciences. The viscount is particu-

larly well up in chemistry.' 'Indeed ! Ah then, Henri, my child, do tell me what is *dynamite*?' 'Pardon me, madame,' interrupted the tutor, 'but nowadays dynamite does not belong to *chemistry* ; it is considered as a part and parcel of *political economy*.'

Medical Brevity.

JOHN ABERNETHY, the celebrated surgeon, was, as every one of his time knew, a man of the fewest words, and his professional heart warmed to any patient who was as curt in language as himself. One day a lady entered his consulting-room, and without saying 'Good-morning'—two words saved—

showed him the index-finger of her left hand. Then the following conversation took place. Abernethy : 'Cut?' Lady : 'Bite !' Abernethy : 'Dog?' Lady : 'Parrot !' Abernethy : 'Bread poultice !'

This was the extent of the first consultation. On the second visit the lady, without uttering a syllable—

HOW is it that some individuals, remarkably and wonderfully endowed by nature, come into the world geometricians, astronomers, poets, painters, musicians born? Through what mysterious law, by what phenomena, do these privileged organisations reach, and often at one bound, and without labour, go beyond, the limits of certain other attainments? No one knows, no one can explain; but it is a recognised and veritable fact, nevertheless.—EUGENE SUE, in *Martin l'Enfant trouvé*.

ble, lifted up her finger. Abernethy: 'Better?' Lady: 'Worse!' Abernethy: 'Linseed poultice!'

Then came the third and last interview. Abernethy: 'Better?'

Lady (*offering fees*): 'Well!' Abernethy: 'Fees? not for the world! You are a most sensible woman; you don't speak. Adieu!'

A Valuable Dog.

SIR EDWIN LANDSEER is accredited with the following *jeu d'esprit*: The sagacity of several retriever dogs was being discussed in his presence. 'Not one yet mentioned to come up to mine,' said he, 'and as thus: Upon a certain occasion I showed him a five-pound note of a well-known county-town bank, near to which I was residing. I rolled up the note, put it into my pocket, walked into the woods, hid it in the trunk of a tree, then strolled on for a mile or so, the dog at my heels. "Back, find, and bring, Trovor," I said; and the dog was off like a shot. I waited, and waited, and

waited for a considerable time, but no Trovor. Presently, however, he came—but without the note. "Hi back, find, and bring," I repeated, "or you shall know what stick means."

'But instead of doing my bidding the animal came quite close to me, and dropped from his mouth, at my feet, one after the other, five brand-new golden sovereigns. He had not only found the note, sirs, but had gone to the bank and changed it. The intelligence of my retriever eclipses even that of the celebrated pointer Mr. Jingle of Pickwickian renown once possessed.'

Clearing off Promises.

HIS Majesty William IV., on his accession to the throne, found a ready and economical method of disposing of the importunities of many an old shipmate. As sovereign of Hanover as well as of England, the Guelphic Order of Knighthood was in his bestowal; so when, say, an antiquated and long-neglected post-captain came and respectfully reminded the King of his former promises or nigh-

forgotten shipboard intimacy, his Majesty would reply, 'Ah, ah! yes, yes! I recollect it and you perfectly. You *must* be rewarded; I'll K.H. you.' And forthwith the supplicant would find himself gazetted 'Knight of Hanover of the Third Class,' with permission to hang a little cross by a bit of blue ribbon to his button-hole, and had thus been royally remembered and dealt with.

HOW THOUGHTLESS!

WHEN I was only twenty-two,
And Ada seventeen,
I thought her temper, *entre nous*,
The sweetest ever seen.
'Tis grief to find a turtle-dove
Grow up a tiger-cat ;
But in my days of early love
I never thought of *that*.

Our young affection grew apace ;
Our future seemed so fair !
I thought she played with such a grace,
And sang with such an air.
'Tis rarely now that Ada sings,
And mostly rather flat ;
She plays but half a dozen things—
I never thought of *that*.

'Twas not alone her lovely looks
That bound my heart in thrall ;
My Ada read so many books,
And understood them all.
But now she might as well be blind—
As blind as any bat ;
She *won't* improve her backward mind—
I never thought of *that*.

Her cheeks were like the damask rose,
Their tint from Nature came ;
Though Art, as ev'ry Cockney knows,
Can emulate the same.
And lately on my Ada's face
They both play tit for tat ;
It strikes me Art will win the race—
I never thought of *that*.

I deemed my pathway all serene,
With such a model wife ;
No care could come to cloud the scene
Throughout our wedded life.
Though Cupid wrecked my love and me,
'Twere sin to blame the brat ;
Poor little wretch, he cannot see—
I never thought of *that*.

HENRY S. LEIGH.



RICHARD WAGNER.

See the Sketch.

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LONDON SOCIETY.

APRIL 1883.

RICHARD WAGNER.

'I MOURN for one dead, I greet an immortal.' Victor Hugo's grandiloquent words, that sounded out of tune over the grave of George Sand, the least self-glorifying of great persons, occurred to us at once, on hearing of the sudden death of Richard Wagner, as a fit and proper dirge for one who, by his own proclamation, was nothing if not sublime; the most notorious musician, perhaps, that ever lived. As for his immortality, his bitterest foes might as well try to disprove the fact of his existence. If no single production of his, from *Rienzi* to *Parsifal*, were ever to be performed again, he would none the less live on for ever, in the extraordinary influence he has exercised over the productions of others, in Germany, France, England, and Italy alike. The spirit of his innovations pervades musical compositions of every genre. It gave Verdi a new impetus in *Aida*; it helped to inspire the author of *Faust*, and guided his plan in *The Redemption*; it breathes through Boïto's *Mefistofele*, Bizet's *Carmen*, the clamour and parade of the *Roi de Lahore*, and the light strains of the author of *Iolanthe*. Wagner was not the first to rebel against the set operatic rules and traditions, and to introduce the idea of the *Leit-motif*. But he is the

arch-rebel who has gone such lengths in successful revolution as to make a return to the old forms impossible.

A celebrity of the world to-day, whose decease fills our public press the morning after with accounts of his life and doings, had he died ten years ago—at sixty instead of seventy—the news could not have excited the smallest public sensation in this country. Beyond an extract or two from *Tannhäuser*, nothing was then popularly known here of his compositions. A few performances of an Italian version of *The Flying Dutchman*, given at Drury Lane at the close of an unsuccessful season in 1870, were insufficient to tell on the ice of general ignorance and indifference about him that had yet to be broken through.

The permanent fame that comes to a man depends on his work alone; when or how it comes depends partly on chance circumstances no doubt, but chiefly on the circumstance of his character. Wagner's early surroundings and position on starting in life were by no means specially unfavourable for an artist. But his personality, apart from his musical gift, and no less remarkable than that gift itself, although it helped in the end to raise him to those heights to which his transcendent ambition had aspired from the

first, and his transcendent egotism enabled him never to lose sight of, yet hindered and deferred his rise. Such a singular career as his must be interesting, whether taken in detail or from the mere bird's-eye point of view, which is all that is at present possible. It has been compared to that of his own hero, Vanderdecken, the tempest-tossed sea-wanderer, storm-driven from harbour to harbour, but whose bark no breakers can sink. 'I was ever a fighter,' declares a fellow-genius and eccentric, Robert Browning, in one of his lyrics, words that this great musician and musical iconoclast might also well accept for his motto.

Wilhelm Richard Wagner was born May 22nd, 1813, at Leipzig, a few months before the memorable battle that turned the tide of Napoleon's fortune. Leipzig, the birthplace also of Leibnitz, is full of reminiscences of eminent Germans—Luther, Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, Mendelssohn, Schumann; but it is not particularly associated with the triumphs of Wagner. His father was a clerk in the Police Office. His mother, left a widow with several children when Richard was but a few months old, remarried an actor at Dresden, Geyer by name. He was also a portrait-painter, and the attempts that he made to discover this stepson's natural bent decided him it was not painting. He died when Richard was but seven; and once, during his last illness, whilst the boy was playing to him in the next room an air he had learnt out of the *Freischütz*, he heard Geyer let fall the words, 'Perhaps he has talent for music.' 'He wanted to make something of you,' the mother afterwards told the child, whose mind readily accepted the idea of future greatness of some sort to be achieved by him.

At nine he entered the Dresden Kreuzschule. His sister's music-master gave him pianoforte lessons at home; but the refractory pupil would not practise, preferring to spend the time in picking out overtures and orchestral pieces, as best he could, on the key-board, with a fingering that made the tutor's hair stand on end, and the tutor throw over the scholar as hopeless. 'He was quite right,' says Wagner, in his brief autobiographical sketch of the first thirty years of his life; 'I have never learned to play the piano to this day.'

He continued, however, to hammer away at the *Freischütz* and Mozart's *Zauberflöte*. *Don Juan* he could not bear, because of the Italian text printed underneath. 'It looked so silly!' Music among the studies of his boyhood was an extra merely. Classics, mythology, and ancient history were the essentials. He was eleven, when the death of one of his schoolfellows having been given as the subject of a prize-poem to the school, Richard's composition carried off the honours, which consisted in the gratification of seeing his verses in print. He now took to writing tragedies on a grand scale. He had learnt English enough to read Shakespeare, and worked for two years upon a drama which he describes as a kind of compound of *Hamlet* and *Lear*. 'The plan was sublime in the extreme,' he tells us. 'Forty-two people died in the course of the piece, and I was obliged to let the majority reappear as ghosts, as otherwise my characters must have run short in the last acts.' Meantime his family had moved back to Leipzig. Here, he recounts characteristically that on finding himself placed in a lower class of the school than at Dresden, he hence-

forward lost all interest in his studies. His tragedy absorbed his entire energies. A performance of *Egmont*, with Beethoven's incidental music, which he attended, determined him to supply his composition with a similar accompaniment. His family were dismayed to find the boy neglecting his Greek and Latin, his mythology and his ancient history. Art, properly and sensibly taken up as a paying vocation, would probably not have been objected to. Two of his sisters adopted the theatrical calling, and his elder brother Albert (father of the celebrated cantatrice Johanna Wagner) was a professional singer. But Richard, who had early rebelled against technical musical training, and could not play any instrument, was thought to be wasting his time. His lucubrations of this period brought forth an overture which he calls the climax of his absurdities, and which was actually performed at the Leipzig Theatre. Its peculiarities—notably the persistent prominence of the drum, which came in *fortissimo* every three bars, excited much merriment among the audience; but the author was profoundly impressed by this first ordeal of publicity.

At sixteen he entered the Leipzig University, but only to qualify himself in philosophy and aesthetics; for, in spite of the opposition at home, his musical calling was manifest to himself, and he never wavered in his allegiance to it. He now put himself through a rapid course of counterpoint under Weinlig, a resident professor, and his mind, once applied to the study, mastered all its intricacies with ease. He also, by his own account, grew a little wild, as behoves the Teuton in the student-phase; but idleness was never long his besetting sin.

Beethoven was the master and model he set before himself; and it is asserted that no young musician was ever more thoroughly familiar with the whole range of that composer's works than was Wagner at eighteen. In the summer of 1832 he paid a visit to Vienna, but soon departed in disgust, upon finding the city wholly given up to the worship of the frivolous strains of *Zampa*. An overture and a symphony of his own were performed at the Leipzig Gewandhaus concerts early in 1833, and met with a most encouraging reception. Of this juvenile symphony, which was revived by him just half a century later, and privately performed at Venice six weeks before his death, one who was then present writes, 'The style of it is in imitation of Beethoven, but remains perfectly individual.' Opera, however, was the form that, from the first, had mainly attracted him, and to which he hereafter almost exclusively devoted himself. He had already sketched the plan of the most important of these early essays, *Der Liebesverbot* or *The Novice of Palermo*, the story of which is founded on *Measure for Measure*, when, in 1834, at the age of one-and-twenty, he accepted the post of conductor at Magdeburg.

Except a few extracts incorporated by him in his later operas, nothing is now known of this early work, for which he sought and failed to procure acceptance at Berlin and elsewhere, but which, at the end of his two years' engagement at Magdeburg, was suddenly there put upon the stage, rehearsed in twelve days, confusedly performed, and unfavourably received. The apprenticeship he had meantime as conductor been forced to serve to the school of Bellini, Auber, and Adam had confirmed his distaste for the all-

popular French and Italian operatic methods, and raised his indignation at their predominance in Germany itself over the national school as represented by Weber and Beethoven.

At Königsberg, where he next became conductor for a year, he married a popular tragic actress, Minna Planer, with whom, at Magdeburg, he had fallen in love. His precarious prospects rendered the step an imprudent one, and pecuniary difficulties were not the least of those with which he was beset when, in 1837, he became conductor at Riga—only, however, to repeat his Magdeburg experiences; whilst the theatrical cabals and unworthy principles and practices he saw dominating and lowering an art he conceived of very differently, filled him with disgust and contempt for the stage in its present condition.

So far, however, from being daunted by the obstacles he had found interfere with the representation of his *Liebesverbot*, he was now deliberately planning a new work, *Rienzi*, whose very nature, as he was well aware, must preclude its production except on a first-class stage. Paris was the goal of his present ambition. It was natural his dreams should turn to the French capital—just at that time a Pantheon of cosmopolitan genius—where Liszt, Heine, Chopin, and Meyerbeer, among foreign stars, found their lights shine more brightly than in their native skies. There *Robert le Diable* and *The Huguenots*, put on the stage with the utmost magnificence, had lately established their composer's brilliant reputation. In the summer of 1839 accordingly, on the conclusion of his engagement at Riga, Wagner, with the first two acts of *Rienzi* in his pocket, took ship with his wife in a sailing-vessel,

bound for France *via* London. This voyage proved a memorable episode, as it was his impressions of the North Sea that suggested to him the idea of his *Flying Dutchman*. Tempestuous weather set in, the ship was driven about for a month, and forced to put in to a Norwegian harbour. The sailors on these coasts are notoriously superstitious, and among the wild legends the passengers heard from their lips, that of the phantom ship and its fated owner, doomed to sail in storm whilst the world lasts, possessed itself particularly of Wagner's imagination. London was reached at last, where, during his few days' stay, 'nothing interested me so much,' he tells us, 'as the town itself and the Parliament Houses.' He crossed over to Boulogne, and there made acquaintance with Meyerbeer, who showed him great kindness, and was struck by what the young stranger showed him of *Rienzi*. Well supplied by him with introductions to leading editors, musicians, and opera directors in Paris, Wagner went on his way thither full of hope and self-confidence.

More than two years of trouble he spent in the French capital, but only to find he had come to the wrong place. His patron Meyerbeer, happening to be absent practically for the whole time, was unable to enforce his verbal recommendations by personal pressure. French romances were given to the young man to set to music as a means of making his name known in Parisian salons; but the popular vocalists, used to Auber and Adam, protested against the unaccustomed character of Wagnerian strains. The Renaissance Theatre, where a French adaptation of his *Liebesverbot* was in course of preparation, suddenly became bankrupt. The fashionable musicians and

directors, the Halévys and the Habenecks, were too busy to give him much attention. *Rienzi* was finished in 1840; but he saw he would have to wait years for the desired opening. He had arranged with Heine—who, in a fanciful autobiographical sketch, describes a play on the subject of the Flying Dutchman—to let him found a musical work on this version. The outline Wagner submitted to the approval of the authorities at the Grand Opéra. They so liked the sketch that they offered to take it from him to give to another composer to set—a favour he declined. But, as hope after hope fell through, he found himself reduced to painful straits to procure the means of subsistence.

'It was well,' he observes, 'that my opera' (*Rienzi*) 'was finished, for I saw myself forced for a time to renounce the culture of art altogether. I must make for Schlesinger' (editor of a musical periodical) 'arrangements for every instrument under the sun, even the cornet à piston.' Vaudevilles were given him to turn into *pot-pourris* for theatrical orchestras. The winter of 1840-41 he notes as the climax of his distress. For Schlesinger's paper, the *Gazette Musicale*, he wrote some prose sketches that were liked. One, 'A Pilgrimage to Beethoven at Vienna,' shows he could see a comic side in his own misfortunes. The conscience-struggles of the penniless young enthusiast—who, to raise money for his pious expedition to the home of the great master, must sacrifice his self-respect, and write galops and *pot-pourris* that pay, instead of sonatas that don't—are touched with some humour. So also is the English millionaire lion-hunter—then a stock-figure in foreign fiction, bearing a suspicious resemblance to the American of modern farce,

with his thirty millions and pushing, interviewing propensities. Both characters reappear in a second sketch, 'The End of a Musician in Paris,' where the struggling misappreciated artist dies prematurely in his misery. Happily Wagner's trials were tending towards a less tragical *dénouement*, and the turn of the tide even then was not far off. He had withdrawn from Paris to Meudon, a few miles off, in the spring of 1841, and had come to despair of outward success, when there came to him the glad news that *Rienzi* had been accepted by the Dresden authorities, and was there in due time to be produced. Meanwhile, his artistic ambition had remained unalterable, his high artistic faculty ready to seize the first chance of fresh assertion the pressure of circumstance allowed. He determined now on accepting the sum previously offered him by Habeneck for leave to concoct a French libretto on the lines of his *Dutchman*; the subject, arranged by Fouché, was afterwards set to music by Dietsch. Wagner wished, however, to be beforehand with the German version, and immediately set to work on his music-drama. For this purpose he wanted a piano—a luxury of late he had foregone. To proceed in his own words: 'After having broken for three-quarters of a year with all musical production, I must needs try and get myself back into a musical atmosphere. I hired a piano. After it had arrived I ran up and down in a perfect agony of spirit. I was afraid I was going to find out I was no longer a musician. I began with the sailors' chorus and the spinning-song. From the first all went as if on wings, and I shouted aloud for joy in the consciousness that I was a musician

still.' In seven weeks it was completed, all but the overture. His thoughts now turned to his own country, and in April 1842 he took leave of Paris, nothing loth, and arrived in Dresden to superintend the rehearsal of his opera.

The libretto of *Rienzi*, founded on Bulwer's novel, is full of dramatic power. The Tribune himself is a noble figure, and the arrangement of the scenes and characters most effective. In the subordination of the love element *Rienzi* stands alone among Wagner's dramas. Adriano and Irene, the Romeo and Juliet of the opera, shrink into insignificance, and their merely personal hopes and fears and joys and griefs seem trivial beside the lofty aims and public cares of the patriot—'last of Romans'—for it is thus that Wagner conceives his hero. The musical setting, though very original in parts, forms a connecting link between the style he created and the school he detested. 'Whilst writing the libretto,' he tells us, 'I thought of what would enable me to display the principal forms of grand opera with all possible splendour.' Here therefore we find the arias, duets, trios, choruses, and ensembles he afterwards avoided more and more; also a canvas for scenic display of the ordinary kind, with the burning of the Capitol and burying of the chief characters in its ruins, for a climax. The music, though more unequal than in any other opera of Wagner's, has great beauties which have never been contested, and which, added to the striking dramatic effectiveness of the whole, resulted, on the occasion of its first performance at Dresden, October 1842, in a complete success for the composer. 'I, the lonely, forsaken, homeless man,' he writes, 'found myself suddenly loved, admired—nay, the object of mar-

val to many;' and a further substantial proof of the favour won came at once in his nomination to the post of Kapellmeister in the Saxon capital.

Rienzi, wherever performed, has generally been popular. It is the only opera of Wagner's that has surmounted the prejudices of the French and won approval in Paris. It was accepted at once by the Italians, and has proved equally attractive here ever since Mr. Carl Rosa in 1879 first introduced us to this 'novelty'—then already nearly forty years old.

Wagner was now thirty, and musician-in-chief to the Saxon Court. No further obstacles could block the way for the representation of *The Flying Dutchman*, which was accordingly brought out at Dresden in January 1843, three months after the triumph of *Rienzi*, but with opposite results.

The public had admired this first work, and were prepared to admire a second in the same style. Their expectations were set at naught by the presentation of something utterly dissimilar, as the next effort proved to be. In *The Flying Dutchman* Wagner's intention had been to discard the ordinary operatic forms entirely, and to work out the ideas afterwards elaborated into the system expounded at length in his treatise, 'Opera and Drama;' and although he does not succeed in emancipating himself altogether, the novelty of the musical plan was perplexing to minds and ears accustomed to judge of an opera as a string of agreeable melodies tied together by bits of recitative. Here was no brilliant *spectacle*, either, to carry away the crowd. On the occasion of the first performance the title-rôle was indifferently performed, and the fine singing and acting of Madame Schröder Devrient as Senta, alone, Wagner

affirms, saved the opera from utter condemnation. It was played twice at Berlin shortly after, but made no way with the Prussians; and the mortification of defeat was the deeper as it came at the very moment when, after many and trying vicissitudes, the victory seemed won.

Crumbs of comfort came to him, however, from unexpected quarters. Spohr, then a veteran of sixty, and music director at Cassel, had the new opera produced there with care and success, and wrote the composer a letter of encouragement that cheered him greatly, as did the testimony of individuals—strangers to him personally, who had been impressed by the performance at Berlin. It was a proof that those existed who could appreciate him, and he now solaced himself, as other great men similarly situated have done, with the notion that he wrote for ten or twelve persons only. Far, therefore, from compromise or vacillation, he went on boldly in the road he had traced for himself, and for this elect of ten or twelve he wrote *Tannhäuser*.

But, as George Sand replied when Gustave Flaubert spoke of the chosen 'ten or twelve' for whom he wrote, 'Those ten or twelve persons are as great or greater than you are. You have no need of them to be yourself. We write therefore for everybody, for all that need to be initiated. If we are not understood, we resign ourselves and begin again. If we are, we rejoice and proceed. There lies the secret of our persevering work and our love of art. What is art without souls to receive it? A rayless sun that would give life to nothing.'

And the *Fliegender Holländer* has proved not unpopular in the long-run. The sailors' songs, the spinning chorus, and the dramatic

duet for Senta and the Dutchman are striking excellences every one allows. Even those who find it wearisome in parts experience from the whole—not least among Wagner's operas—that 'mysterious fascination that takes hold of our minds,' which Schumann notes as their characteristic force. It is a weird sea-piece, a wild musical picture, the direct inspiration of the gray North Sea, the desolate coasts that inspired Heine's wonderful cycle of poems—of which Wagner's work seems a dramatic and musical equivalent.

It was in Paris that the romantic legend of *Tannhäuser*—the knight and master-singer who was beguiled into the haunts of the pagan goddess, and afterwards sought on earth in vain for the pardon for his sin that was accorded it in heaven—had first fastened itself on Wagner's attention. On his way to Dresden he had visited the picturesque old castle of the Wartburg, on a height in the forests of Thuringia—memorable in history as the residence of the Landgraves and Luther's place of retreat, in romance as the traditional field of competition of the knightly singers. Thus it figures in Wagner's work. The book was finished in 1843, the music in the course of the next year, and the first performance came off at Dresden in 1845.

Tannhäuser was Wagner's first drama on a German subject. His preference of mythical to historical themes he elevated into a principle he strictly adhered to. *Tannhäuser*, though in part allegorical, owes its dramatic force to the human interest that sustains the fiction. Drama, music, and the manner of their interweaving are markedly representative of Wagner. If at first it worked itself into favour through those

special parts which are easily impressive at a first hearing—the overture, the now rather hackneyed March, the chorus of pilgrims, the tremendous finale to Act ii., and Wolfram's Hymn to the Evening Star—which prepared the way for its public acceptance as a whole, it is only as a whole—regard taken to the novelty inherent in the conception and its execution—that it can adequately be judged. But like all bold innovators, whose rapid intuitions anticipate the tardy conclusions of other people, Wagner had to create the taste for the form of art he inaugurated, and to educate his public—a matter of time—and the first representations of *Tannhäuser* at Dresden added few to the composer's disciples. But it decided his position as a professed pioneer in an undiscovered operatic country. His ideas were much too new to take the public by storm, but much too important not to provoke fierce attack. From *Tannhäuser* dates the rise of the Wagner controversy, which rages still, and once raged so loud as to be compared to the strife of Guelphs and Ghibellines. For years he stood almost alone, and to hold on in his course had to steel himself against an amount of abuse and ridicule that might have hardened a more genial disposition. He held on, however, and wrote *Lohengrin*, a work of equal dimensions with *Tannhäuser*, and equally far removed in style from the opera schools of an elderly day—a day, be it recollected, when Meyerber's *Prophète*, *Etoile du Nord*, and *Africaine*, Gounod's *Faust* and *Romeo e Giulietta*, Ambrose Thomas' *Mignon*, were still unborn in the brains of their respective composers. *Lohengrin* was already completed, when in 1848 the revolutionary troubles came to complicate the situation.

As a root and branch reformer in art, rather than from any settled political opinions, Wagner inclined to a general sympathy with the insurrectionary spirit then abroad, and, King's Kapellmeister though he was, he said and did enough (and very little was needed) to be stamped as a rebel, and to find himself, on the crushing of the movement of revolt by Prussian forces in 1849, obliged, like hundreds of others, to fly the country.

It was a heavy blow; for ten years he was debarred from assisting in the stage production of any of his operas, which must be left to make head against opposition as they might. He went first to Paris for a short while, and it was there that, as he tells us, 'Ill, miserable, and despairing, as I sat brooding, my eye fell on the score of my *Lohengrin*, already quite forgotten by me. I felt suddenly grieved within myself that this music should never sound from off the death-pale paper.' It occurred to him to send it to Liszt, now musical director at Weimar. Their acquaintance was very slight. Ten years before they had met in Paris—Liszt the idol of the artistic and fashionable world; Wagner an unknown struggler, poor as Job and proud as Lucifer—easy fraternisation was unlikely to ensue. Since then they had shaken hands on more equal terms—Liszt had heard *Rienzi* and *Tannhäuser*, and recognised the composer's genius at once; and Wagner, assisting at a rehearsal of the latter work at Weimar, had perceived with delight his own intentions admirably reflected in Liszt's reading. Here was a glimmer of hope for *Lohengrin*. 'Two words I wrote to him. His answer was the news that preparations were being made for the performance on the largest

scale that the limited means of Weimar would permit.'

Lohengrin was in time to prove the most successful of all Wagner's operas. Although to this day clashing too much with received ideas not to provoke criticism in parts, an adequate performance is all that is needed to insure its triumph as a whole. It soon became a favourite in Germany. Years later it introduced Wagner to the Italians, and roused the excitable Bolognese audience to a frenzy of enthusiasm. Its first performance in England, at Drury Lane, 1875, made the composer and his fame a reality in this country, where its popularity is still on the increase. The drama, ingeniously compounded by Wagner from old legends originally unconnected, is picturesque and well adapted for musical illustration. The extraordinary dramatic effect of the scene in Act i., when the suspense of the falsely-accused Elsa and her judges is ended by the appearance of the summoned champion and deliverer in the Knight of the Swan, is so exciting that a composer of less genius could hardly have escaped the dangers of an anti-climax.

The beauties of the music, which, perhaps, Wagner never surpassed, are incontestably of the highest order, and sustained throughout. The part of Elsa has become a favourite with *prime donne*, and in spite of the composer's active antagonism to the 'star system,' he cannot stay the vocal gifts of an Albani, the peculiar dramatic force of a Nilsson, from investing the opera with additional charm.

Wagner, in exile, fixed his residence at Zürich. After the production of *Lohengrin* at Weimar in 1850, fifteen years were to elapse before a new opera of his was put upon the stage. Meantime, his energy, though the old

battles were not yet half won, was dreaming of new worlds to conquer. It was in these days that he laid the plan of *The Ring of the Nibelungen*, a trilogy with an introductory prelude, *Rheingold*, the composition of which, with intermissions of other work, occupied him for five-and-twenty years. Now that this *opus magnum* has been put on the stage again and again, and with success, it is difficult to estimate the extraordinary spirit of enterprise, the indomitable pluck and art-constancy of one who, at a time for him of dark days, few friends, and no home, worked on in a way that promised him neither gold nor glory, but which seemed to him the best and highest way.

To these first years at Zürich belong also his theoretical writings, 'The Music of the Future' (an epithet flung at him by a Cologne critic, and accepted by him and his party) and 'Opera and Drama.' In the latter he systematises his own method—no other will he tolerate. For himself he was right—no other was possible—and the worth of his theory lies in the fact that it was deduced from original inspirations—works of great beauty, such as *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser*, not an artificial method, after which he set himself to compose.

Wagner's lifelong practical and dogmatic insistence on the artistic impropriety of a music-drama, in which the drama should play the part of a mere peg to hang often most inappropriate melodies upon, gave an incalculable impetus to a move already going on in the right direction. His general principles have prevailed over criticism—not so always his mode of application. The model opera, the joint production, from first to last, of perfect poet and perfect composer, has yet to appear. Wagner's

libretti are full of fine poetical ideas and figures, and strikingly dramatic combinations; but any one who desired to maintain the supremacy in vocal music of sound over sense, sense of verbal diction, might not unfairly point to the unmeaning jingle of verses Wagner sometimes puts into the mouth of his singers, lines whose silliness fails to injure the effect of his beautiful musical setting.

It was towards this time that he published his ferocious pamphlet against the Jews in general and their music in particular, which could not but heighten existing prejudices against him; indeed by pugnacity in print, by despotic and often wild musical criticism, he and his party to the last day kept raising fresh barricades in their own path for them to demolish. His own writings, apart from his music, fill nine volumes, and the Wagner literature of others would form a large library.

From his solitude and work on the *Ring* at Zürich he was called away to London in the spring of 1855, by an engagement he accepted to conduct the Philharmonic Concerts of that season. As a composer he was unknown to the English; his reading of the works he had to conduct was not always that with which the public were familiar. An extract or two that were given from *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser* sent away the audience more in bewilderment than delight. It is related that he gave dire offence by often conducting without the notes, which his familiarity with Beethoven's scores made easy for him. Apprised that this was held by the audience to be a slight passed upon them, he consented next time to have the book before him, and was congratulated on the consequent improvement in his con-

ducting of the *Eroica* symphony. An observer proceeding further to examine the volume on the desk was discomfited to find Rossini's *Barber of Seville*! The anecdote is significant, at all events. The diffusion of musical culture and improvement of musical science among us since have removed the worst prejudices of narrowness and ignorance. England is the country, next to Germany, where Wagner has won most success. Every one of his operas has been performed, and not one has ever failed in London. But he had another generation yet to wait for his day of triumph. His departure from our shores in 1855 took place without regret on either side. When he returned in 1877 he had to defend himself against the overplus of public honours and attentions enthusiastic worshippers were ready to shower upon him. Two days after his death a concert of the same Philharmonic Society took place. The orchestra played the *Dead March*, and the audience, with one accord, rose, and remained standing—a spontaneous tribute to the memory of the once despised Richard Wagner.

On his return to Zürich he began a new opera or music drama, *Tristan and Isolde*. This, completed in 1859, is the most perfect illustration of his theories, and by it can, we think, their worth as theories be fairly tested. In 1858 he varied his exile by a visit to Italy—Venice in particular charmed him; but even less than England was Italy, where all German music was abhorred, yet ripe for the music of Wagner. To Paris, whither in spite of the adversities he has ever there had to encounter from gods and men, he seems to have been drawn by some *ignis fatuus*, he for the third time returned in 1860, as he hoped to victory. Extracts of

his compositions performed at the concerts of the Salle Ventadour had been praised by some critics, and *Tannhäuser* was in rehearsal at the Imperial Opera. Wagner's supporters, though including such names as Théophile Gautier, Baudelaire, and Champfleury, were units in the face of a strong set against him. A sharp controversy in the papers, in which Wagner, in his usual aggressive spirit, took part—for discretion to him was cowardice, prudence meanness—gave the note of war, and in the strife of personal and political antipathies the artistic question was virtually lost sight of. *Tannhäuser*, brought out at the Grand Opéra in 1861, had to be withdrawn after three representations, in the face of a hostility that would not even allow it a hearing. The members of the Jockey Club, in particular, mustered in full force, and with penny whistles, trumpets, and cat-calls, drowned the siren strains of Venus, and the best efforts of the knightly singers. The grievances of the club were twofold. In the first place, they represented the Legitimist party, and the opera, as given by command of the Emperor, came from the wrong camp. Secondly, it was known that Wagner had refused to interpolate a ballet in the second act. An opera without a ballet in the second act was, for these gentlemen, who were not in the habit of arriving before the second act, and who came for the ballet alone, a dangerous precedent, and not to be endured. Thus his worst enemies on the press, though persuaded that the condemnation was just, had to record it as unjustly passed on an unheard work. So fell *Tannhäuser* in Paris; but it has had honourable companions in misfortune. Was not the *Freischütz* there literally

hooted off the stage on its first performance? Had not the *Zauberflöte* and *Don Giovanni* to be guarded against a similar fate by careful 'preparation' for the Parisian palate, involving incredible mauling and disfigurement, even to the introduction of airs by fashionable pianists of the day!

As a set off to this artistic reverse, there came to Wagner the joy at this time of having the ban of exile finally removed. His operas these ten years had slowly but surely been making their way to public favour all over Germany. His return was followed by a successful concert tour, extended to Russia, where his reception was highly flattering, and it seemed as though he might now hope for a speedy and triumphant representation of his *Tristan and Isolde*. Offers for its production came both from Carlsruhe and Vienna; but in each case he had the mortification of seeing his new work put into preparation, delayed, put aside and finally abandoned for reasons he regarded as miserably insufficient: the singers said their parts were impossible; but Wagner, like Napoleon, had no such word in his (musical) dictionary.

This repulse, the last of consequence he was ever to encounter, depressed him profoundly. 'It was all over with me,' he writes to a friend; 'every effort for my success had miscarried; the strangest, almost demoniacal ill-fate made my every step in vain, and I was resolved to withdraw into retirement, and renounce all artistic enterprise for ever.' At this moment a message of life came to him from the youthful King of Bavaria, Louis II., who had just ascended the throne, a musical enthusiast and passionate admirer of *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*. He now summoned the

composer to the capital, to superintend the rehearsals of *Tristan and Isolde*, there to be produced under far better auspices than would have attended it in Vienna.

To Munich Wagner came accordingly, and the extraordinary favour now extended to him further opened distant possibilities of carrying out his most ambitious schemes connected with the *Ring*, at which he worked with a fresh stimulus. *Tristan and Isolde*, duly performed in 1865, was received with enthusiasm. If it has not always been equally fortunate it is because singers equal to such arduous rôles are not always forthcoming. Adequately given, it is an extraordinarily impressive work, and the sensation it created in the audience on the two occasions of its performance last July in London was great and genuine.

For two years Wagner, in the enjoyment of an amount of authority, intoxicating to the fantastic artist, remained in Munich, whose natives are indebted to him for not a little astonishment. The King gave him a villa at Starnberg, and loaded him with distinctions. The infatuation of the royal eccentric for Wagner's music showed itself in curious ways. Midnight performances of *Lohengrin* had to be given with only his Majesty to look on. On the battlements of the castle of Hohenschwangau, in the Bavarian highlands, says one German writer, bands of music marched up and down playing Wagner's music, whilst Prince Taxis was drawn across the lake in a skiff with a mechanical swan, and recited passages from *Lohengrin*, the King beholding the scene from an upper window. Alone with Wagner and the *prima donna*,

in fancy dress, and with a page to scull, he must row out by moonlight on the lake, and sing love duets out of *Tristan and Isolde* with the lady. It is related that the latter, forgetting to preserve the distance of manner etiquette demanded, the King pushed her into the water, and Wagner had much ado to fish out Isolde and pacify the royal Tristan.

More serious were the Court jealousies and petty enmities his position excited, and which, inflamed by his reckless indiscretions of speech, soon brought a hornets' nest about his ears, and resulted in his withdrawal from Munich and Court glories in 1866; but the royal patronage he had won was steadily accorded him till the end of his life, and the firm hold his operas had taken on the public at Munich no social squabbles could damage. Here his next new work, the *Meistersinger*, was first brought out in 1868, and carried all before it. The public were now in some degree familiarised with Wagner's method; and this opera, whose many attractive qualities are universally recognised, stepped at once instead of having to climb into popular favour.

His original idea in the *Meistersinger*, conceived long before, had been to parody in the persons of the pedant bourgeois rhymesters and music-makers of Nürnberg the heroic master-singers of the Wartburg, that form the subject of *Tannhäuser*. But his true art instincts led him to make the burlesque a secondary feature, and to show us in the worthy and pathetic figure of Hans Sachs the soul of a true artist in a shoemaker. The whole is ingeniously conceived, picturesque, like all Wagner's works; written in a lighter vein, the

humour not heavier than the conditions of existence of German humour seem to require. Walther, the hero and poet-born, whose fortunes illustrate the sure triumph of genius in the end over prejudice, hostility, and dullness, is one of Wagner's happiest inspirations.

He had taken up his abode once more on the neutral territory of Switzerland, and in seclusion at Lucerne proceeded with the *Ring*, now approaching completion.

Since his recent triumphs he had become a personage all over Germany, and his party, both in numbers and in noise, now could hold their own against the opposite. If he made bitter enemies, he made also fanatical friends; and though their furious championship has often given rise to false and injurious impressions of their chief, they have rendered him substantial aid in practical ways. Towards 1870, Tausig, the eminent pianist, set on foot certain active measures for realising the composer's original design, as expressed by Mr. Hueffer, 'for the performance of the *Nibelungen* in a theatre constructed for the purpose, by a select company in the manner of a national festival, and before an audience which would be, in this way, like the artists themselves, entirely removed from the atmosphere of ordinary theatrical shows.'

To this end Wagner societies were formed by the composer's admirers in numerous important cities both in and out of Germany, and the funds raised enabled the first stone of the building to be laid on May 22nd, 1872, the fifty-ninth anniversary of the composer's birth. Baireuth in North Bavaria, the chosen spot, lies remote from the din and strife of capitals in the broad valley of the Main. Here Wagner, almost with-

in sight of the rising walls of his festival theatre on the hill, built himself a house which he made his home for the last ten years of his life. In 1870 he had contracted a second marriage with Cosima, daughter of Franz Liszt. 'Wahnfried,' his villa, standing at the end of the wide, well-built, old-fashioned-looking principal street of Baireuth, is not a palace, nor in externals fantastic. Here he completed his *Trilogy*, the first festival performance of which, opening August 13th, 1876, can never be forgotten by those who had the good fortune to be present. The grandeur of the undertaking was in modern art unique. Here was the best of everything in every department—an orchestra of over a hundred and twenty, led by Wilhelmj, conducted by Richter; the first German singers of the day, Materna, Vogel, and Niemann at their head; scenery and mechanical effects on an unexampled scale, carried out with the utmost perfection—this in a model theatre, under the composer's personal direction, the Emperor's patronage, and before an audience composed exclusively of distinguished artists and cultivated amateurs, which, as the fame of the enterprise spread abroad, soon counted representatives from all civilised nations.

The climax of his career. Indeed, it is hard to see what the most soaring ambition could further suggest. The *Ring*, by its unusual length and extraordinary demands on the scenic, vocal, and dramatic resources of an opera-house, stands apart as a work only to be satisfactorily performed under exceptional circumstances. Only the rarest perfection, moreover, could quite reconcile us to what are, in our opinion, the three questionable features of the work. The incredible proximity of parts

of the drama ; the prominence of giants and dragons, figures too grotesque on the stage to be tolerated in serious drama ; and the excess of *spectacle*, which almost forces away attention from what is more worthy of it. The confident predictions of some critics, however, that the *Ring* would never travel beyond its mountain home, have been falsified by its successful performance in many German capitals, in Brussels, and in London. The separate parts of the *Trilogy* are complete enough dramatically to be singly performed, and will be given from time to time for the sake of the music, which is ill-represented by concert extracts ; although the love song, the chorus and ride of the Amazons, and the Fire-music in the *Walküre*, the wood symphony in *Siegfried*, the hero's song and duet with Brunnhilde, and his Farewell and Funeral March in *Götterdämmerung*, have found and kept a place in concert programmes.

Those who visited Wagner in his retreat at Baireuth told strange stories, which lost nothing in the telling, of his peculiar habits. Like Balzac, he found costume an aid to composition, and was said sometimes to receive guests in the mediæval garb he used to don when writing *Siegfried* or the *Meistersinger*. He liked to vary the furniture of his apartments and cram them with curiosities. But it is easy to parallel these vagaries of Wagner's—perhaps a 'last infirmity' of lively imaginations—with the queer devices to which his compeers in music and literature have had recourse to stimulate their fancy. Glück composed best out of doors in a meadow with his piano and a bottle of champagne ; Sacchini with his pet cats around him ; Paesello in bed ; Sarti in a dark room ; Meyerbeer during a thunderstorm ; Auber on

horseback at full gallop ; whilst Adolphe Adam buried himself under an eiderdown quilt ! With Balzac, the need to hang his walls with silk and lace became the tyranny of his life ; he preferred, said his friends, to go without coffee and soup than porcelain and silver plate, and thus often wanted for needful things in the midst of luxury. Wagner left no fortune. Like Balzac, whilst he lived and romanced he was beset by the craving to see, in the realities about him, some touch of the fantastic world in which such an imaginative artist is wont to live.

The petty weaknesses of great men are always relished by the vulgar, eager perhaps to seize on some link between these heroes and themselves. If the composer of *Lohengrin*, the *Walküre*, and the *Meistersinger* had a fancy to array himself in green velvet, and to vary the colour of his dressing-gown according to the character of the work on hand, what more harmless outlet could he have found for that dash of madness which seems to be one attribute of great wits ? It is otherwise with certain acts of his life, which appear to denote a strange savagery of disposition and absence of compunction. It is possible to be too good a hater. His attacks on the Jews, on composers whose music did not happen to please him, the burlesque he wrote on the Siege of Paris shortly after the event—these cannot possibly be excused as freaks of youth due to youthful effervescence. They were the deliberate outcome of his mature age and judgment, and would suffice to show that, great man and great musician though he was, he had grave imperfections—a colossal arrogance and corresponding curtailment of human sympathies—that have not been without bane-

ful influence on his career and on his works.

The next year, 1877, was marked by his visit to London, where the 'Wagner Concerts,' under his direction at the Albert Hall, were an interesting feature of the musical season. It was during his stay that he sat for the admirable water-colour likeness painted of him by Hubert Herkomer, a masterpiece of portraiture of which it is impossible to speak too highly.

Wagner's next and last work, *Parsifal*, based on the Arthurian legend of the Grail, was already then in progress. Completed at Palermo during the winter 1879, spent, as had now become his custom, in Italy, its performance at Baireuth last year is still fresh in the memory of all readers.

The allegorical element, a secondary feature in *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, is overpowered in *Tristan and Isolde* by the intense realism of the tragic story. It underlies the fable of the *Ring*, where, however, we lose sight of it sometimes in the variety and direct interest of the action; but it is supreme in *Parsifal*, whose essentially mystical character places it by itself among operas, as stands the Passion drama of Ammergau among plays. In one respect the impression created was identical. Wagner's warmest admirers in this country disapproved of his subject, and anticipated that, in representation, it must jar on their feelings. They were agreeably surprised, and confessed it. The composer's grave and reverential treatment was reflected in the manner of the work's execution by the artists and the mood of the listening public; all were felt in perfect harmony with the sanctity of the subject. *Parsifal* at Baireuth silenced objections, though to transport this sacred

drama to an ordinary theatre might involve as many objections as the production of the Ammergau play in New York.

The excitement and exertion consequent on these festival representations of 1882 left Wagner somewhat out of health. Rest and a mild climate for the coming winter were again recommended, and he left, with his wife and children, for Italy. He came to his favourite Venice, where he rented a floor in the Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi.

'He leads a quiet retired life in the midst of his family,' writes his Italian friend Filippi. 'Those who wish to see him may find him nearly every day on the Piazza San Marco, between four and five, taking his daily walk, sometimes alone with his wife, sometimes with his children. Often he sits alone on one of the marble steps that support the Byzantine columns of the cathedral, meditating or resting from his work.'

Christmas Eve, Madame Wagner's birthday, was celebrated by the interesting private performance of the juvenile symphony before alluded to, composed for the Leipzig concerts at the outset of his career. None of the friends around him this winter felt uneasiness on his account. But he was troubled with an affection of the heart, from which doctors had feared a sudden catastrophe, and he himself had a presentiment of his approaching end. Asked why he spoke of *Parsifal* as his last work, he once answered, 'Because I am going to die.' The infirmities of illness and old age he was, happily, to be spared. The idea of decay is one, indeed, it is hard to associate with so indomitable a nature. On the morning of February 13th he had ordered a gondola, as usual, but early in the

day was seized with illness. The doctor was sent for; but medical aid could avail nothing, and in a few hours he died, surrounded by those who loved him well.

He was buried at Wahnfried, in

the mausoleum of gray granite he had erected for himself in his gardens, with the simple inscription—'My last resting-place—Richard Wagner.'

BERTHA THOMAS.

YESTERDAY.

'Twas but a brief twelve hours ago;

The flower you wore can scarce be faded—

The damask rose that blushed, you know,

Among your dark locks brightly braided

(My own have got a touch of gray,

But I forgot it yesterday).

Twelve short hours back (in fact, last night),

I passed with you, on my arm leaning,

Out of the ballroom's glare and light

Into the cool verandah, screening

Us both from sight; your gloved hand lay

A space within mine yesterday.

Just for the time 'twas not unpleasant;

And now—'tis gone like last night's tapers.

The hand which then clasped yours at present

Is tying tape and sealing papers.

The face o'er parchments frowns to-day

That smiled beside yours yesterday.

Sic transit gloria! so they fade,

The magic moments we have known;

The girls we loved, the friends we made,

Living or dead, from us are gone;

And nothing left us but a gaze

Cast sadly on life's yesterdays.

Ah, little love of yesternight,

There beat not hearts so kind and true,

No eyes (not even yours) so bright,

As those in vanished hours we knew.

The earth hath no such maidens to-day,

No lips so rosy, no laughter so gay,

As when Plancus was Consul—yesterday.

ARTHUR DENISON.

THE FOREIGNERS.

BY ELEANOR C. PRICE, AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS,'
'VALENTINA,' ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

A MORNING WALK.

Miss MOWBRAY called her nephew's wife a worldly woman, and to a certain extent she was right. Mrs. Mowbray had been brought up by parents who taught her to think the world's opinion everything, to be ambitious for herself and her family, and to care very much for all the world's good things, and a good deal for the money that buys them. Such an education must have its results; in this case they were less than might have been expected. She went against her theories at the very beginning of life, by returning George Mowbray's love and marrying him; a man of good family, it is true, but not rich, and never likely to gain distinction of any sort. A woman could not live with him and be very worldly at the same time, unless she was hard and unloving, which was not at all the case with his wife. All his children too loved him so much, and were like him in their different ways. Mrs. Mowbray's worldly prudence could not work disagreeably in such an atmosphere as this, though she did plan and scheme for them all in her own mind, and sometimes felt as if she was living in a house full of children. Aunt Lucia, who was fond of talking about the disposal of her property, had hinted several times that she might possibly leave it to Pauline. The girl was her favourite in the family, partly because she

liked pretty things, and partly because she believed that Pauline loved her. But she also made it understood that her intentions depended very much on the marriage Pauline might make. Mrs. Mowbray kept all these hints to herself; she did not wish to raise a family storm. But Pauline heard something of the same kind from Aunt Lucia herself, and did not altogether dislike the idea of being her heiress, and providing generously for all her brothers and sisters.

Since they had been in France, and especially at Maulévrier, new possibilities had been crowding into Mrs. Mowbray's mind. It was all very well for George to laugh; but she believed that Frenchmen were human beings, and sometimes did marry for love. Pauline's absorbing interest in the young Marquis was not any plainer than his admiration for her. Mrs. Mowbray hardly knew what to think of it, and could not feel her husband's calm security.

Pauline found that days at Maulévrier had a way of flying; some people might have said it was because of their monotony. As a rule, nobody in the house saw the Marquise before eleven o'clock. She was up at six, went to mass, and then visited her hospital, her poor people in the village, and her farm-buildings. Mr. Mowbray used to knock at Pauline's door about half-past eight, and he and she generally went off for a walk, which was delightful in

the summer morning. Now and then it happened that Gérard joined them or met them in the park on their return. Punctually at eleven the breakfast-bell rang, and Madame de Maulévrier waited for nobody. After breakfast the ladies sat and worked in the salon for an hour or two, during which time the post generally came, and there were letters and newspapers to be read. The gentlemen were supposed to spend this time in the salon, but Victor escaped as soon as possible to his cigar. Mr. Mowbray talked and entertained his hostess as she sat working diligently. Gérard lounged about, or sometimes brought in great books of prints from the library, and showed them to Pauline on a table in the farthest window.

Between one and two, no matter how hot it was, the hardy Marquise put on a shady hat and went out to walk about her farm. Mr. Mowbray loyally followed her. Mrs. Mowbray went to her own room to write letters. Pauline sometimes joined her father and the Marquise, but oftener her mother. Gérard used to stand lingering in the hall, and look after her as she walked slowly up-stairs, but she did not dare to answer those wistful looks by staying in the salon.

Later in the afternoon they often went out for a drive; sometimes only the ladies and Mr. Mowbray. Or, if he stayed at home fascinated by some new discovery in the library, one of the young men would take his place in the carriage.

Dinner was at half-past six. After that they often strolled about in the park and garden, or sat on the terrace. When it was dark they went into the high gloomy salon again, where the Marquise once more sat down to

her knitting or needlework. But the pleasantest evenings were those when she gave herself and her guests her one amusement—music. Sometimes she would play Mozart or Beethoven, or more old-fashioned music still; sometimes she would accompany Gérard while he sang. Pauline used to like to sit where she could watch them at the piano; his dark gentle face leaning over close to his mother's shoulder, while she smiled with a happy sweetness that only his songs could bring to life in her face.

The very calm of these days made them more dangerous; there was no excitement in them, only a charm that went on deepening.

One day, when Pauline and her father were starting for their usual morning walk, Gérard overtook them in the avenue, and carried them off by a short cut into green woodland paths, where long grass grew under the tall trees, and they had to step carefully and think of possible vipers. Then they descended into a lane full of stones, between high banks, where fern and wild flowers grew. Mr. Mowbray, who knew a little of botany as well as of everything else, was delighted to find some rare orchids among these flowers. Gérard climbed up the bank, ready and eager to help him.

'Well done, my friend,' said Mr. Mowbray. 'You are as active as an Englishman.'

'I must take that as a compliment from you, monsieur,' said Gérard resignedly. After a moment he went on, 'I suppose our life strikes you—mademoiselle and yourself—as very different from anything English. But what is this great difference?'

'Come to England and we will show you,' said Mr. Mowbray.

'Ah, I wish I could think that

was possible! But I hope you are a little prejudiced; and yet you are right. This sort of life is miserable.'

'To me it seems charming,' said Pauline.

'You make it charming; but let me complain for two minutes. I want you and Mr. Mowbray to confess that I am an unfortunate fellow. Will you listen?'

'Growl away; not a bad plan for getting rid of the cobwebs,' said Pauline's father.

She herself only smiled her answer. Gérard was encouraged, and plunged into a list of his grievances. He certainly was in a complaining mood that morning. His sorrows were many, from being his mother's eldest son, and being kept always at home while his brothers went to college and had their profession, to the terrible injury of not having been allowed to fight the Germans, to the life he led now—a mere useless dilettante, while other men were doing their work—to the poverty which crippled him, and led to what he described as 'endless complications.'

Pauline felt as if she could have said a great deal to him in answer to all this. She would have preached a more effective sermon than Mr. Mowbray, who was advising the young man to set himself some definite work—to write a book, to cut down trees, to dig in the garden.

'Long fellows like you are always lazy,' said Mr. Mowbray; 'I was just as bad myself before I married. By the bye, you will probably marry one of these days, and that will give you something to think about. Or perhaps your mother will prefer your not marrying. It might make the complications worse, certainly.'

Gérard made no answer. He was flushed; but the sun was

high by this time, and he was not much used to walking. Pauline was glad that just then they reached the end of the stony lane, and turned into a more frequented road. Opposite them, a wild unkept avenue of dark firs led up to a pair of high gates between pillars covered with ivy.

'What has brought us here?' said Gérard, stopping suddenly. 'I did not mean to come so far.'

'So much the better; the walk will do us all good,' said Mr. Mowbray. 'What is this place? It looks rather dismal.'

'I meant to show it to you one day; but it is too far for mademoiselle. However, as we are here, it is Monsieur de Brye's house, the Maison Blanche.'

At the name Pauline could not help shivering; it seemed as if something more than chance had brought them here.

Mr. Mowbray was much interested in the Maison Blanche, and did not notice that his companions became rather silent as they walked up the avenue. A dog barked furiously when the gate was opened; an old woman popped her head out at a window, but seeing M. de Maulévrier, nodded and drew it in again.

On each side of the court, opposite each other, there were two long low white houses. In the middle there was a plantation of young firs, and at the end facing the gate some rough steps led up into a green raised place, also planted with firs, and fenced in with the remains of old blackened walls, half-covered now with ivy. This was the site of the château that had been set alight by its master in the Revolution.

They wandered round the old defences, and Gérard told them what a grand house it had been. In Louis XV.'s time, the Comte de Brye had pulled down his

feudal castle, and had made a splendid building of white stone. Every one in the country called it the *Maison Blanche*, and this name had gradually come to belong to it, lingering on after those white walls had crumbled down, and the inlaid floors and painted ceilings had blazed, and the family, finding their way back at last to the old place, had established themselves and their servants in the two half-ruined pavilions on each side of the great court. It was sad to walk about under the sighing firs, among the brambles that now grew tangling round those blocks of fire-worn stone. Mr. Mowbray was eager to make out the plan of the building. He went clambering down by what was once the lower story of a turret, leaving the two young people standing above in the shade.

'I don't think I should like to live here,' said Pauline. 'There must be ghosts.'

'Certainly. There is a lady who shot her husband because he would not let her have her own way. She wanders about here in the winter nights, and cries very sadly. Then an old *Seigneur de Brye* has his hunting-meet in the court there. He and his men and dogs go hunting all round the country. On certain nights they pass through the park at *Maulévrier*. Many of our peasants have heard the wild notes of the horn, the gallop of the horses, and the baying of the dogs. You believe me, *mademoiselle* ?

'One learns to believe anything in a country like this,' said Pauline.

'Ah, yes! we have some mystery left to us. You in England have everything explained and proved scientifically, even to your religion itself. You have no dreams, no superstitions. You are a sensible people, without any

romance. Well, perhaps you are all the happier for it.'

'I don't know. I don't think we are all so very sensible,' said Pauline, looking up at him and smiling. 'In some things, surely, you are more matter of fact than we are.'

These young people were fond of talking about the differences between their nations, and certainly managed to find a good deal of harmony in the contrast. Gérard argued eagerly, but with an evident wish to be contradicted. Pauline, much as she admired France, stood up stoutly for her own country. When she thought of *Mademoiselle de Brye*, on whose ground they were standing, it was with a real thrill of pity. Certainly England had the best of it there. An Englishman—if he was worth anything, at least—having engaged himself to one girl, would hardly find this perfect satisfaction in the society of another.

A strange man, whom it was hard to meet on his own ground, the thin ice of a poet's friendship! To forget and efface oneself, to be natural and brave—that was the only way to walk in safety.

Pauline tried honestly for this, and on the whole succeeded very well. As long as she was with Gérard, there was no difficulty; only when she was alone, the girl's heart rebelled and revenged itself a little. But after all, the pleasure was worth the pain.

When Mr. Mowbray came back from his researches, and saw them standing together in the shade of the fir-trees, Pauline smiling, Gérard talking in a low voice, completely engrossed in her and her smiles, an instant's self-reproach crossed his happy irresponsible mind. Mrs. Mowbray had given him such lectures, such warnings, about taking care of

Pauline in this strange land, and now he had gone away and left her for at least ten minutes tête-à-tête with a young Frenchman. But he soon reassured himself. He knew the world, as he had often told his wife, better than she did; he stuck to his opinion that any entanglement with Gérard was impossible. This Frenchman, he felt sure, was like other Frenchmen, only even more dutiful than most of them, and therefore even more likely to make his mother's choice his own. And as to Madame de Maulévrier, whatever compliments she might pay to Pauline's mother, was it within the bounds of possibility that she should offer her son, the head of the house, to a girl of a different nation and a despised religion? No, the idea was absurd, and only worthy of an Englishwoman.

'Of course the fellow admires her—tremendously—but as a picture, and an intelligent girl to talk to,' thought Mr. Mowbray as he came up to them. 'Well,' he asked, 'what have you been talking about?'

'M. de Maulévrier has been telling me ghost-stories,' Pauline answered serenely.

'They are all thrown away. Mademoiselle Mowbray does not believe in ghosts,' said Gérard.

Pauline could not remember that she had told him so.

CHAPTER XIV.

DREAMS.

PAULINE had every chance of dreaming her dream out, at least as far as the château and its mistress were concerned.

There was a curious old town twenty miles off, in the opposite direction to Tourlyon, noted for its early fortifications, and other

things which interested antiquaries. Mr. Mowbray and Gérard made a plan for spending a few days at this town, to explore it and the country round it, while the ladies stayed at Maulévrier. Mr. Mowbray was bold enough to suggest taking Pauline with him, but his wife would not listen to this for a moment. She was capable of looking at all sides of a thing, and she neither wished to scandalise Madame de Maulévrier, nor to throw Pauline too much in Gérard's way. Mrs. Mowbray was not too sure of her own wishes, or of what would be good for her child. So Pauline was left with the elder ladies, and a very quiet little party they were. Victor also was away; he had gone back for a few days to Tourlyon, to be present at some fête given by Léon's regiment. Mrs. Mowbray and Pauline were not sorry when he went: they did not care for his formal manners and cool cynical air.

The clockwork existence went on with more monotony than ever, only broken by one or two visits from the Curé, and these were not entertaining. He and the Marquise were hindered by politeness from talking of their usual subjects—family affairs and the Church: but besides this, the Curé did not like English people, and disapproved of Gérard's fancy for these particular ones. He was not to be won by the girl's beauty or her mother's pleasant looks; he was grave and distant, watching the intruders with a little suspicious fear.

Mrs. Mowbray, who had many anxieties, and wanted amusing, and was getting tired of this household and its stiff ways, thought perhaps the Curé's visits were better than nothing: but Pauline preferred the days when he did not come.

In the long, still, sunny hours she wandered about the precincts of the château, sometimes exchanging a smile and a few words with the servants or work-people who crossed her path, and to all of whom she was an object of deep interest, but oftener quite alone and silent through those sweet, sad, endless days. Madame de Maulévrier had lent her the *Life of the saintly Duchesse de Doudeauville*. She would go out with the book in her hand, and presently sit down in some corner of the garden and read half a page; but then her eyes would be lifted, and the open book would lie neglected on her knee, and she would sit gazing at the old towering château with its sharp lights and shadows and rugged roofs breaking the blue sky, thinking,

‘Ah, thinking? nay,
But rather dreaming all thought away.’

When Pauline was not in the garden, she had a favourite place indoors, where she found that in Gérard's absence nobody ever disturbed her. It was a large old sofa in the recess of a window, at the far end of the library. Not that the books were much attraction to Pauline; but she had often found her father here with Gérard talking to him, showing him books, or arguing on some pet subject. The corner seemed haunted by clever expressive faces and friendly voices. Pauline as she sat there alone could almost see the tall slight figure standing in the window, the mouth and eyes smiling as he talked to her father, too often looking at her all the time.

But this window had other attractions of its own: a pretty homelike view with some life in it. No stern courtyards and gates, clipped alleys and formal terraces, which even a person in love with the château might find wearisome

in time; but looking out from this commanding point over softly clustering tree-tops, millions of tender lime-leaves and blossoms just coming out, over which the wind passed with a gentle rustle, taking and scattering their delicate scent; then down into the lower part of the park, where a few cows were feeding, where the rush-bordered ponds, home of the troublesome ducks, reflected every tint of the sky, and not far beyond the thatched gable of a farmhouse peeped out from its shelter of trees. Jacques and Marie Mingot, with their little girl in her round cap, might often be seen trudging past the ponds on their way to château or village. It was like a glimpse of the outside world to see them going about their business, and perhaps coming back laden with a long loaf from La Baleine, the fat woman who lived near the church.

One day at breakfast Madame de Maulévrier expressed a wish to show Mrs. Mowbray a cow she had just bought. Mrs. Mowbray, whose practical knowledge included a few ideas about cows, was of course delighted. They went into the salon, still talking about cows, and all three sat down to their needlework. Pauline agreed with the young men in thinking this the most tiresome hour of the day, and was always glad when the post came, which it did to-day a good deal later than usual. One o'clock was past when Michel brought in the letters. Mrs. Mowbray had two, one from her husband, which she read smiling and gave at once to Pauline. Mr. Mowbray wrote in brilliant spirits: he had seen a great deal that interested him deeply, and had been introduced to some most charming people. ‘I suppose you and Polly would not object to another invitation,’ he wrote, ‘es-

pecially if it is to meet a prince. Our friend M. de M. will settle all that, however.'

The Marquise, meanwhile, was reading a letter from Gérard, with a clouded brow and one or two exclamations. 'What nonsense! what impossibility! I, who have not left home for years!' But when she had done she looked across at Pauline with a sudden smile.

'Voyons!' she said, tapping the letter with her finger. 'My old friend M. de Coigny is to be honoured with a visit from the Prince of Catalonia. Gérard tells me we shall be asked to meet his Royal Highness, and our English guests too. M. de Coigny has been introduced to Monsieur Mowbray, and is as much struck as other people have been—pardon, madame. There will be a large party; it may amuse mademoiselle; as to myself, I never leave home now.'

She looked questioningly at Mrs. Mowbray, who till she spoke had been busy with her own letter, an English one, long and crossed: something in it worried her a little, as Pauline saw at once. Neither of them responded very brightly to Madame de Maulévrier's announcement. Mrs. Mowbray thanked her cordially, but said that in her opinion it was quite time for them to be going on their way. Of course, however, she must consult her husband before giving a positive answer. No doubt this would be a wonderful new experience for Pauline. 'I have had almost too many new experiences,' thought the poor girl, but she only smiled rather faintly.

'Of course, madame, she would find herself in fairyland, and learn a little history too,' said the Marquise. 'I would not take every young girl to the Château de Bois-

carré, they are almost too old-fashioned; but a young girl of Mademoiselle Pauline's discretion, that is quite another thing. In the mean while shall we visit my cow?'

Mrs. Mowbray was quite ready. Being a moment alone with Pauline, she gave her the English letter.

'From Aunt Lucia,' she said. 'Read it carefully; I think you will agree with me that we ought to go home at once. Don't come out, the sun is too hot for you. Where shall I find you when we come in?'

'In the library; it is so cool there. Mother, is anything wrong at home?'

'Nobody is ill. I don't quite know what to make of it—you will see. I think we ought to go home.'

'So do I!' said Pauline, with a sigh.

Her mother gave her a quick glance, but had not time to speak, for Madame de Maulévrier came back with her hat on.

Pauline escaped to her sofa in the library-window, and read Aunt Lucia's letter, crouched in one of its soft old leather corners. It was, as usual, a pleasant disjointed letter, full of scraps of information about her garden, her people, that tiresome parson who was always wanting to go back to the north. With his usual pigheadedness, he would not listen civilly to Mrs. Mowbray's delightful accounts of French life; so Aunt Lucia was obliged to enjoy them alone.

'You are all asleep and dreaming, I can see,' she said. 'You must wake some day; and, by the bye, Ben was asking me yesterday whether George had any shares in the West Mercian Bank. He says some rumour is making people sell their shares. He says these ru-

mours are wicked, and talks about rats and sinking ships; but this is his usual nonsense, and I don't see, as I told him, why the poor rats should be drowned. I know he would like better to be ruined with a dozen others than saved by himself; but if he had a parcel of boys and girls I hope he would think differently. I believe George has some shares in the West Mercian. Tell him, with my love, that he had better come home and attend to business. He must tear himself away from his dear French people, and the sooner the better. Ben thinks so too, in spite of his talk, or why did he mention the rumour to me?

Pauline's ideas of money and business were even more shadowy and unpractical than her father's. Her head was full of other things, too; and if her conscience had been at rest in enjoying Maulévrier, Aunt Lucia's letter would have made very little impression. What were bank shares? The girl hardly knew. Her mother managed these things, with the advice of the London uncle, who was supposed to be a clever business man. Even he, however, had something of the Mowbray flightiness, and had lost money more than once by his speculations. Pauline had no doubt that her mother was right, that they would have to go home, and to refuse this wonderful invitation of Monsieur de Coigny's. She was obliged to confess, for herself, that it was the best thing to do. These days of quiet thought had shown her that she was weaker than she fancied. It was terrible to find oneself so taken up with a man who was engaged, and not in ignorance either. Besides the risk to herself, it was almost treason to Françoise de Brye. Not quite—no, not quite; for Pauline assured herself that Gérard meant

nothing. She could not blame him, because her soul was so much smaller than he thought, because she was troubled with a consciousness to which he was so entirely a stranger.

When Mrs. Mowbray came back from her walk, Aunt Lucia's letter was on the floor, and Pauline, resting her cheek on her hand, was gazing out of the window. She moved and turned to her mother, thus bringing her face more into shadow; but Mrs. Mowbray thought there was a tear on her eyelashes. She had just been gratified by a few sincere compliments which the Marquise had bestowed on Pauline. Madame de Maulévrier had spoken almost as if she would like to keep Pauline with her when her parents went back to England. That would not do, of course—and she had not exactly said it; but the mere hint of such a thing was strangely complimentary.

Mrs. Mowbray did not really believe that this bank was in any danger, she told Pauline, as she sat down beside her on the sofa, and picked up the letter to look at it again. Still it was always best to be prudent, and Aunt Lucia was no doubt right in advising them to come back and look after their affairs.

'But you know,' said Mrs. Mowbray, 'if anything had been seriously wrong, your uncle would have written. I sent him our address the other day. He knows much more about these things than Aunt Lucia, or Ben Dunstan either. But I believe we ought to go home; only I don't like to disappoint you. Of course, we can do nothing till your father comes; and he may have set his heart on going to this château and meeting this prince—who doesn't interest me at all, by the bye.'

'Nor me,' said Pauline wearily.

'Yes, let us go home. I long to see them all again—don't you?'

'But you are happy here, darling?' said Mrs. Mowbray.

At this moment she was far more anxious about Pauline's future than about that of the West Mercian Bank, important as it might be to them all.

'O yes. But it is what Aunt Lucia says—I am asleep and dreaming. Dreams get uncomfortable sometimes; they are too much,' said Pauline, putting her hand to her head; 'and one is glad to see the humdrum old daylight—can't you understand?'

'Madame de Maulévrier is a remarkable person,' said Mrs. Mowbray, not answering this. 'Are you fond of her?'

'I don't know; rather—not exactly.'

'I think she likes you very much, in her way. I was quite amused by the things she said to me just now—about missing you, and liking to look at you and hear your voice. She almost hinted she would like you to stay on, if we went to England.'

'I couldn't do that! O mother, I hope you didn't say I would!' exclaimed the girl, flushing crimson, and seizing her mother's arm.

'There was no accepting or refusing in the case,' said Mrs. Mowbray quietly. 'I should not accept, however, for I think our child had better stay with us till she leaves us in the orthodox way.'

'I don't want ever to leave you at all,' murmured Pauline.

'You need not say that. It is only natural that you should find some places and people very attractive. And I can see when my Pauline is appreciated.'

Pauline submitted quietly to her mother's embrace. She now only regretted that she had not been brave enough to trust her mother long ago.

'There is something you don't know of, mother,' she said after a minute. 'I wish Madame de Maulévrier had told you.'

These were such different words from any Mrs. Mowbray had expected that for the moment she was startled. What could the girl mean? She held her hands, and looked at her with eager anxiety.

'Something that I don't know! Something about you?' she asked hurriedly.

'O no, not about me,' said Pauline; and her smile was comforting, though Mrs. Mowbray was more puzzled than ever.

'Don't be so mysterious, child, for heaven's sake!' she exclaimed.

'Do you remember our last evening at Tourlyon—at Madame de Brye's? Did you notice that Mademoiselle de Brye was talking to me for a long time? Well, she told me something about herself, poor little thing! I was not to tell any one but you, and I didn't even tell you—I wish I had. She is engaged to Monsieur de Maulévrier, mother—at least, their parents have arranged it, but I think it is not finally settled yet. It is to be, though. Mother, do you understand? You must not tell any one—they don't wish it known at present.'

Mrs. Mowbray sat staring before her: the news had indeed astonished her; at first she could hardly take in all its bearings. George was right: these French arrangements were extraordinary, inscrutable. She must acknowledge that he knew the ways of this nation, and she did not. Wonderful, that a few miles of sea should make such a division.

'Why, he doesn't care a straw for her—not a straw,' she said presently, thinking aloud.

'Perhaps he does, after all—at any rate, he will be good to her,' said Pauline, very low.

'Well,' said her mother, 'I think he should be a little more careful in his manner to other young ladies.'

Pauline looked up and smiled bravely.

'To speak quite truly,' she said, 'I am glad we are going away; but it has not been *his* fault. I knew all the time, and understood—'

'What certainly was difficult to understand,' Mrs. Mowbray added. 'But I am too thankful that the girl told you.'

She looked long into her child's sweet face, with loving, questioning, anxious eyes. Was the dear heart gone—stolen, even unconsciously, by this dreadful, sentimental Frenchman?

'You are not unhappy?' she whispered.

'No, my darling,' answered Pauline, laying her head on her mother's shoulder. 'I'm only a little foolish, and very much ashamed. I should have got over it without saying anything, perhaps, only I couldn't let you think— Now that you know everything, I am much happier; and when we are once back in England, I shall be as happy as a queen.'

Mrs. Mowbray was wise enough to take this assurance, and to press for nothing more.

'And that poor girl,' she said, 'is she contented? What made her tell you?'

'I don't know. She hates this place, and thinks the whole thing dreadfully dismal; but she hopes he won't be difficult to live with.'

'How extremely shocking!'

'His brothers are to give up their share, somehow, so that he may be able to marry. This estate and Monsieur de Brye's run into each other, so it all suits very well.'

'Then his brothers can't marry!

I have heard of such arrangements, but I always thought *they* belonged to the bad old times before the Revolution,' said Mrs. Mowbray. 'Poor Monsieur Gérard! Not that I ought to pity him; but they all want pity, it seems to me. Yes, my dear, I agree with you. I should like to wake from this uncomfortable dream, and find myself back in England. Banks may break, but we don't sell our children—not often, at least.'

CHAPTER XV.

A WAKING.

PAULINE was not down-stairs when Mr. Mowbray and Gérard came back, driving up to the door in the late afternoon, and waking all the noises of that old palace of sleep. She heard the dogs barking and the gates clanging, and went out of her room into the corridor, where she could look down from the great window, and see the arrival without herself been seen. Her mother and Madame de Maulévrier were out on the steps receiving the travellers. She heard her father ask, 'Where's Polly?' and then came the same question from Gérard, in a different form, and a lower, more anxious tone, 'And mademoiselle?'

Pauline reflected that a French girl would have been standing dutifully behind her mother, joining silently in the reception of her father and her host. She hoped she was not doing wrong by being away; for it was true that she had escaped on purpose, half dreading the meeting before her mother's eyes.

Fate had, indeed, treated her and Gérard with a cruel kindness. These days had been their first separation for more than a few

hours since they met that evening in the doorway of the old hotel at Tourlyon. She could not help wondering whether Gérard, too, was aware of this. Probably not: why should he think of anything that mattered so little? Pauline scolded herself heartily, and went down stairs.

The staircase descended into the outer hall: to reach the salon, where Madame de Maulévrier generally sat, one had to go through the inner hall and the ante-room. When Pauline came down stairs, nothing was to be seen of Mr. Mowbray and the ladies, who no doubt had gone into the salon. The doors of the outer hall were open to the broad calm sunshine of the court; the great gates, too, were still standing open, and beyond them the lime avenue was a deep cavern of fragrant shade. Gérard, who was just crossing the hall with his dog, came forward, and met Pauline at the foot of the stairs.

'You are come back; have you brought papa?' she began, smiling, as he took the tips of her fingers and bowed over them in his ceremonious way.

Gérard did not answer instantly. He stood still and looked at her, and in his dark thoughtful eyes there was something quite new, something which Françoise de Brye had certainly never seen, and which to Pauline, who had no right to it, was only sad and terrible. At first, however, unprepared, and suddenly fascinated, she could not help looking too—telling him, poor child, all that he told her—and that moment was long enough for an endless history of love and despair. Then Pauline was seized with the consciousness of what she was doing, of what Gérard was doing, of a reality more painful than anything she had feared or fancied. Her

eyes fell, and she felt herself flushing and trembling, struggling all the time to be brave and cool, and to say something careless; but that was impossible. She looked up again, half thinking and almost hoping she must have been fool enough to deceive herself; but no, it was worse than ever now. Even Gérard's pale brown skin had flushed scarlet; he was moving forward, he was going to speak; his eyes said that he had forgotten all obstacles, and was ready to defy any authority. Pauline felt that she must not stay a moment longer; she turned round and fled away up-stairs.

Gérard stood where she had left him. He had hardly known what he was doing, or what that meeting again would be. And this discovery—why, it meant something very like madness. An honourable man! What had he done? What could he do now? He had shown this English angel a feeling which ought never to have existed, but which, in the sudden rapture of seeing her again, had grown to twice its former stature, and become, for the moment, uncontrollable. And she—she looked—Gérard hardly dared to think how she looked; and this added another pang to his self-reproach, for, of course, she did not know that he was a traitor. He went out into the park with his dog, and stayed there till nearly dinner-time.

Pauline found things to occupy her up-stairs, and the elder ladies sat with Mr. Mowbray in the salon, listening to all his adventures and projects. Madame de Maulévrier was much pleased and interested. Mrs. Mowbray listened anxiously; she had more than one trouble in her mind, and there was nothing helpful in George's enthusiasms.

He had made up his mind to

write a book on Legitimism, a subject on which the depth of English ignorance, he said, was incredible. Nobody would believe how often he met people who did not know the difference between Legitimists and Orleanists—educated people too, who had read history. Some had never heard of Henri Cinq at all; others confounded his family, hopelessly, with that of his distant cousins. The Spanish branch, too, who knew anything about them? How many people were aware that Don Carlos was really King Charles VII. of Spain? Mr. Mowbray confessed that his own ideas on these subjects had been a little misty till within the last few days, when that most agreeable Monsieur de Coigny had taken the trouble to make everything clear to him. With this charming intelligent man he had talked over the plan of his book, which was not to be written in a partisan spirit—that could not be expected from an Englishman—but to be a simple statement of facts, a history of the past and present of the Legitimist cause.

‘Come and see us next week,’ M. de Coigny had said; ‘we will introduce you to a prince worthy of the name;’ and on this had followed the formal invitation to meet his Royal Highness at the Château de Boiscarré.

‘You don’t really mean to go, George?’ said Mrs. Mowbray, when they went up to dress for dinner.

‘Indeed I do! Why shouldn’t we go? The invitation is a great compliment—don’t you know that? Besides, Maulévrier would be awfully disappointed; he is a real friend, that young fellow; he wishes us to see the best of everything in France. And if I am to write this book, which will sell like wildfire, could I have a better

chance of collecting facts and impressions for it? You have been rather dismal lately, I suppose, and you are getting homesick. Polly has been bored with you two old ladies. Where on earth is Polly, by the bye? I haven’t seen her yet.’

‘Never mind her now; she is very well,’ said Mrs. Mowbray, as he turned towards the door. ‘I want to talk to you. I daresay this visit may be amusing and instructive, and all that. But I think we ought to go home.’

‘Why are you in such a hurry? Our time is not nearly up yet. We are going to Tours and Orleans and Chartres, and a dozen more places, before we go home. Isn’t Madame de Maulévrier cordial? Do you think she is tired of us?’

‘Not in the least; she is extremely kind, and I quite believe they would like us to pay this visit. But I have had a long letter from Aunt Lucia, which—’

‘Hang Aunt Lucia! What does she want? I am not at her beck and call, neither is Polly, though she may alter her will a dozen times. What does she want now?’

‘You talk like a schoolboy,’ said Mrs. Mowbray. ‘I won’t read the whole letter, but just listen to this;’ and, in spite of his impatient growls, she read Aunt Lucia’s warning about the bank. ‘I agree with her, George,’ she said. ‘I think we ought to go home.’

But Mr. Mowbray was not impressed at all. He laughed the whole thing to scorn; it was nothing but an old maid’s fancy; as to Ben Dunstan’s opinion—why, the wish was father to the thought. Nothing gave these Radicals more pleasure than the downfall of some respectable institution like the West Mercian Bank.

‘I know the fellow,’ said George Mowbray, who certainly seemed

to have left his small supply of common sense behind him at Villemur. 'He is a regular alarmist. Don't you suppose John would have written or telegraphed, if there had been a grain of truth in this? If Ben Dunstan told Aunt Lucia that the Bank of England was going to stop payment, she would believe him. It is a dodge of Mr. Ben's to bring Polly back to England. He is like you—he thinks some Frenchman will fall in love with her, and that wouldn't suit him at all.'

'Poor thing! I don't think it would make much difference in his prospects,' said Mrs. Mowbray. 'Well, I do agree with what you say about John. I thought of that myself.'

'Of course. All our affairs are in John's hands. You feel better now, then? What will you be nervous about next, I wonder? This Prince is a young fellow, I believe; perhaps he will fall in love with the lovely Polly.'

'We must go to this château, then? Neither she nor I care about it at all.'

'I told you we were going, hours ago. I am going, and I shall insist on taking you and Polly. I shall not leave you here again; you get thoroughly stagnated, and nervous and stupid, when you ought to be taking in all sorts of new ideas. You have had quite enough of moping here, and so has she, no doubt. She is quite well' with sudden earnestness.

'Perfectly well,' said Mrs. Mowbray. 'Yes, I think she has been a little bored. Can you keep a secret? If you can, I'll tell you a piece of news about our friend the Marquis.'

'The most natural arrangement in the world, when one comes to think of it,' he said when she had told him. 'Poor lad! Well,

I have no doubt he is quite satisfied. Probably it was settled years ago. Rather a pity not to make it public—don't you think so? If Polly had not been the most discreet of girls, she might easily have taken his politeness for more than it was worth. I've seen him look desperately sentimental; a silly girl would have been taken in.'

'Mademoiselle de Brye guarded against that, you see,' said Mrs. Mowbray quietly.

'Clever girl! She knows her fiancé pretty well, that's clear. It was a deep thing to do, to confide in Polly. I am glad she thought of it.'

'Be sure you keep the secret,' said Mrs. Mowbray.

She saw that her husband was entirely set on their going to the Château de Boiscarré, and, like a sensible woman, she was now ready to make the best of it. Of course, bank or no bank, she would have been glad to take Pauline away from these people as soon as possible. The child was brave and good, but it was no use stretching these fine cords to their tightest; still, as it must be done, the mother determined that she and Pauline must from this time be inseparable. No more lingerings in the library-window, or morning rambles with her father and the Marquis; from this moment she must be like a French girl, never to be seen without her mother. And fortunately this companionship would be quite natural and easy, through the formal festivities of the Château de Boiscarré. Ah, Mrs. Mowbray, there is a common proverb about a stable-door, which we will not quite venture to apply to our dear Pauline; yet as an allegory it may be true of girls, as much as of any inferior part of creation.

That evening, watching her daughter and Gérard with a new alertness, Mrs. Mowbray saw that his manner at least was changed. The old melancholy weariness, from which his English friends had roused him, had come upon him again; he was silent and moody, except when Mr. Mowbray appealed to him; then he seemed to make an effort to rouse himself, and enter heartily into the subject of the future book and its materials. But to the English ladies he behaved with a grave formality, keeping away from Pauline, scarcely looking at her, never addressing her, speaking to her mother with a sort of cautious politeness that struck her as something quite new and unpleasant. Of course Pauline too must notice this, and it might very well account for her extreme quietness, and the deep interest with which she appeared to listen to her father's unflagging chatter.

'Why can't the idiot be natural?' thought Mrs. Mowbray, who felt unreasonably angry with Gérard. 'I believe he thinks he has been going too far, and he is putting on these airs as a warning to us. It would have been better to be honest from the beginning. He need not be alarmed: sooner than Pauline should marry one of these heartless foreigners, I would—Aunt Lucia is perfectly right. I only wish George had not lost his senses. I wish that prince and that château were at the bottom of the sea!'

In this frame of mind Mrs. Mowbray made another attempt at persuading her husband to give up his romantic plans, and to go home without further delay. She talked about the bank, for she did not like to say much about Pauline, whose confidence was sacred even from her father.

But Mr. Mowbray, having

talked all the evening about his book, could not see the smallest importance in any other subject. His book was to run through many editions, and was to make his fame and his fortune; what madness, to run away from the personal experience that would be the cream of it!

'We shall bring out another edition of the *Revolution Sketches*, with a good many touches added,' said the author, in his new enthusiasm. 'And then I might follow it up with a novel of French life, to run through one of the best magazines first, and pay like anything. Gérard de Maulévrier will do for the hero.'

'A bad return for his hospitality, and a morbid, ridiculous hero,' said Mrs. Mowbray, with some acrimony. 'Do you know, George, you remind me of the man in the *Arabian Nights*—Schacabac, wasn't it? The man who sat making his grand plans—just as you sit now in that armchair—and with one kick smashed all his possessions.'

'My dear, always verify your quotations. The man's name was Alnaschar. But I don't see the likeness.'

'Very well, Alnaschar. I beg your pardon, it is just the same thing. You are so wrapped up in this book, and these Legitimists, and so on—I don't myself see why they should interest anybody, but that's another question—your head is so full of them that you can't attend to your English affairs. This bank may break, and we may find ourselves ruined, just because you are so buried in these things as not to realise the danger.'

'Why, if I was thinking of the bank from morning till night it might break all the same.'

'Don't be so stupid, so provoking!' cried poor Mrs. Mow-

bray. 'George, do be serious for one moment. At your age such folly is inconceivable.'

'There are different kinds of folly. I wonder when you will outgrow your nervousness,' retorted her husband, with perfect good-humour. 'However, there is something in what you say, and I'll tell you what you can do. I don't believe a syllable of these rumours, you know; but one may as well be on the safe side. Write to John; tell him our plans, and how Aunt Lucia has frightened you; and ask him to take steps for selling out, if he thinks there is the smallest reason. That will make your mind easy, I suppose. Of course, if he advises it, we can go straight home after Boiscarré; but I won't miss that for all the banks in Christendom.'

Mrs. Mowbray was pacified, and the letter was written. But it happened that Mr. John Mowbray had been called out of town to an arbitration case in Scotland, and the letter, not being manifestly important or businesslike, lay waiting for several days in his study at home. Mrs. Mowbray had not thought of the more certain way of sending it to his chambers. His daughters, with whom their aunt was not a particular favourite, thought it would keep very well till their father's return.

CHAPTER XVI.

ROYALTY.

BOISCARRÉ lay buried in the depths of what was once one of the great forests of western France. Its seigneurs had in old times been masters also of the little walled town of Villemur, then not much better than a robbers' nest in the forest. Their dark old tower frowned over its prin-

cipal street, and the gate, the Porte Boiscarré, which was only approached by an avenue five miles long from the great château in the midst of the woods. In old days this was the only road from the outside world to the moated fortified stronghold, from which the Counts of Boiscarré and Villemur had held down all the poor wild scattered people of the surrounding country, protected themselves by their great belt of wolf-haunted, almost inaccessible forest, which was only threaded here and there by paths known to their keepers and woodmen.

But all this was in early feudal times, and long before the Revolution great changes had come to Boiscarré and Villemur. The power of the nobles had been sapped by Richelieu, who dismantled the strongest castles all over France, so that their owners could no longer retire to them, and reign there like princes, often in open resistance to the King's authority. So when the eighteenth century began, the seigneur of Boiscarré was thinking more of pleasure and splendour than of fighting and tyranny. He pulled down a great portion of his castle in the forest, and built a great stone house with wings, with courts and quadrangles, magnificent stone staircases, and halls and galleries, stables, almost as fine as the house, for fifty horses, an orangery, a ballroom, a theatre. He laid out gardens, made bridges over the moat, which was no longer needed for defence, and cut down trees in all directions, making four grand avenues instead of one, so that his château could be approached with equal ease and stateliness from north, south, east, and west.

He still, of course, was lord over his neighbours, and the town of Villemur still lay at his feet;

but this servitude was less bitter than in the time of his ancestors, and the grandeur and luxury of Boiscarré put many a louis into the pockets of the small Villemur tradesmen. There were many abuses, no doubt, and much suffering; but there was now a touch of gilding on the chains, and this man was a generous master, and was remembered as 'the good Count' as long as two such words did not, in French minds, flatly contradict each other. He died at Boiscarré, an old man, in the full enjoyment of the splendours he had created.

His sons, his daughters, and most of his grandchildren died at Paris, less peacefully, but with quite as much courage and philosophy, in the Place Louis Quinze, at that time called the Place de la République.

One of his granddaughters had married the Marquis de Coigny, and these people saved their lives by emigrating to Germany, where they lived on nothing, and died in miserable poverty. Madame de Coigny, a melancholy woman, was sometimes heard to wish that she had followed her father and mother long ago up the steps to the guillotine. Her son was more fortunate than his parents. After their death he married a German heiress, who fell in love with him while he was giving her French lessons; and by and by, returning to France, he and his wife made an expedition to see the old château of his mother's family, to which there was no nearer claimant than himself.

The place had been deserted for many years; it was wild, overgrown, and out of repair; only in the stately rooms a colony of poor people had established themselves—peasants whose huts hardly protected them from the weather, waifs from Villemur and other

villages. The old family was almost forgotten, even in Villemur, where the whole population were formerly its vassals. Monsieur de Coigny was disgusted with the dirt, the neglect, the squalor and ruin of the old place, and was ready to leave it to its self-made owners, and never to see it again; but his wife was of a different opinion, being both a prudent and an imaginative woman; and the end of it was that the ragged intruders were got rid of without much trouble, and the De Coignys devoted their lives to restoring Boiscarré to something of its earlier state and beauty. It became once more a Royalist stronghold; for like most of the good old French families, they never wavered in their political faith; and this occasion, on which their son received a Bourbon prince as his guest, was by no means the first of its kind.

Madame de Maulévrier received a letter from Madame de Coigny, begging her to change her mind and join the party at the château. She was assured that the Prince remembered her very well, and hoped to see her again. Long years before he had been at a hunting breakfast with his father at Maulévrier. He was a child then, and M. le Marquis was alive; he was not likely to forget his kindness and that of madame. This pretty message touched Madame de Maulévrier's loyal heart, and she decided to break through her rule and pay this visit, greatly to Mrs. Mowbray's relief, for she and Pauline both looked forward to it with a certain degree of dread.

It was a charming and interesting idea to go back two hundred years, to find themselves once more in the reign of Louis Quatorze, in an atmosphere of Court ceremony, such as hardly exists

now even in Courts. To a historical enthusiast, like Mr. Mowbray, one can understand the attraction of the whole thing; but his wife and daughter, their minds full of troubles of their own, feeling even the Maulévrier life unnatural and longing to get back to England, each for reasons of her own, may be forgiven if they thought they would rather read about the thing than go through it. However, they could not escape; and the stern, kind, straightforward presence of Madame de Maulévrier seemed like a tower of strength and protection to their English shyness.

It was, as she had said, like fairyland, like a chapter of history, or rather of romance. Pauline had never seen such a brilliant house before, so splendid, so perfectly appointed. She seemed to be in some enchanted palace, as she followed her mother through the great magnificent rooms with their many mirrors, in which it did not occur to her that herself was probably, after all, the most beautiful thing reflected. Monsieur de Coigny made this remark, with a smile and a bow, directly after she arrived; her mother smiled, and Madame de Maulévrier gave a few words of laughing assenting rejoinder. Pauline was seized with a fit of stupid shyness; she hardly heard what they were saying, and for several minutes kept her eyes on the floor. In the nearest mirror, where M. de Coigny had seen and admired her picture, she had just met Gérard's eyes, as he stood in the background, looking, she thought, so noble and so melancholy. For the last day or two he had been careful to avoid her; but here, just now, he had forgotten the tell-tale ways of a looking-glass, and had allowed himself the pleasure of a

moment's gaze. No one but themselves read the little story, but it was enough to fill Pauline at least with new trouble and terror.

She was very quiet and shy with the French ladies, who were quite ready to amuse themselves with her till the Prince's arrival the next day. There was a lively little party assembled to meet him. The De Coignys themselves were most agreeable people. He was tall and simple, with a fair face, something like an Englishman, and looking a great many years younger than his age, which was near sixty. Madame de Coigny was also tall, about forty, with dark frizzed hair, a hooked nose, brilliant eyes and complexion. She was extremely talkative and demonstrative, laughing a great deal and paying extravagant compliments with a kind of dashing ease which made everything she said seem right and natural in its way. Pauline was half fascinated, half frightened by this gay personage, who might very well, with her looks, speeches, and manners, have been a Court lady at Versailles in the old time. She kept close to her mother, fancying that Madame de Coigny might pounce upon her and say something terrible—what, she had not the faintest idea. She was reassured, however, by Madame de Maulévrier's evident liking for their hostess, and by hearing her say that Anne de Coigny was the best creature in the world. This seemed amazing, from such a stiff and proper person as the little Marquise; however, Pauline presently discovered that Madame de Coigny's remarks, startling as they were, were never ill-natured, never really distressing to any one; and she soon was almost accustomed to have her cheek touched with Madame de Coigny's fan or the tips of her long fin-

gers, and to hear herself called 'Ma belle ange,' and to be told that her eyes, hair, and complexion were simply the loveliest ever seen, and so on, till every point of herself and her dress had been petted and praised in its turn. Then, when Madame de Coigny had turned to some other guest, two or three more ladies would come and seat themselves round Mrs. Mowbray and Pauline, and the same thing, with a little less familiar freedom, would begin over again. Mrs. Mowbray, who came in for her share of compliment, was rather amused by it all, and thought Pauline understood it, and was not likely to be spoilt by the experience. The chatter of these funny women had some truth in it, Pauline's mother knew very well; and such foolish talk was not quite confined to French people either, for Aunt Lucia, dear old goose, being fond enough of compliments herself, had often talked to Pauline about her beauty in a rather extravagant way.

Pauline took it all from everybody in her soft smiling manner; they were very kind to smile at her so pleasantly and say such pretty things; she was amused, as she had been when Mademoiselle de Brye praised her blue eyes and her white skin. Neither she nor her mother had quite the real true Englishwoman's disgust and contempt for humbug of any kind; but then it never struck them that these light laughing compliments could deserve the solidly unworthy name of humbug.

One young married woman, the Comtesse de Loches, a Parisian in the extreme of fashion, and considered a great beauty, did not trouble herself to speak to the two Englishwomen, bestowing on them glances of curious contempt, as if they were some new variety

of savage. Round Madame de Loches the gentlemen gathered in an admiring circle, while she chattered and flirted, and pretended to be terribly bored with them all. Mrs. Mowbray noticed her with some amusement, and remarked afterwards to her husband that however contemptuously men might speak of these painted flirts, they always in fact worshipped them.

'Not all men; and it isn't exactly worship,' replied George, who had himself—though at a respectful distance—been hanging on the words and glances of Madame de Loches. 'Such a woman is a study—a type.'

'A common type,' said Mrs. Mowbray, 'thanks to the good taste of men.'

'Not so very common—at least I hope not, for the credit of women.'

The next day the Prince of Catalonia arrived from the station in a carriage and four, accompanied by M. de Coigny, and followed by other carriages with his suite, the whole procession led by M. de Coigny's 'piqueur,' splendidly dressed and mounted. When he came prancing into the court of the château, a chorus of hunting horns struck up the 'Royale,' and Madame de Coigny with her guests came forward to welcome the young Prince.

He was a small, pale young man, graceful and dignified enough, with a grave, indifferent air; most of his suite, Spanish nobles with fine figures and dark romantic faces, were more imposing at first than himself. Yet one could not be in the room with him for ten minutes, all talking familiarly together, without seeing and feeling what he no doubt felt most intensely himself, that if they were noble, he was royal. It made the whole thing more strange and

striking to think that here was a prince unacknowledged by governments, unknown to history, a representative of the old Bourbons, a direct descendant of Henri Quatre and many more kings, yet never, in all human probability, to wear a crown on his head. It was a pageant of bygone etiquettes, a playing at Court, a sight at which the spectators might have smiled, if the pathetic side of it had not struck them more strongly.

Of course the French people, the Prince's entertainers, were not impressed in either of these ways; they were all brilliantly agreeable. Madame de Coigny treated the Prince with a mixture of petting and reverence; Madame de Loches murmured softly in his ear, and brought faint smiles to his inanimate face; the men stood round with their hats in their hands, for the Prince only was supposed to be at home at Bois carré, and kept their voices respectfully low.

If one was to count up all the little peculiarities of old Court etiquette which were observed during those days, the list would be endless, and would only interest a few people like Mr. Mowbray, who noted them with eager care. Mrs. Mowbray thought it all dreadfully tiresome. Pauline went through it as if it was a dream; she was interested to a certain point, and really felt a little enthusiasm for the melancholy Prince, who made her understand Jacobite times, and for the quaint stateliness of the manners and customs. She remained close to her mother, and nobody spoke to her; she was the only 'jeune fille' there, and so quite out of place, and quite uninteresting in that character to men and women alike. Mrs. Mowbray, watching with a little horror the course of one or two violent flirtations, especially

that of Madame de Loches with the Prince, understood what Madame de Maulévrier had meant when she talked of the old-fashioned ways of Bois carré, and of mademoiselle's discretion, and could not help wishing that her innocent child was away. But Pauline was guarded by her own innocence and obscurity, and strangely, too, by the thought of Gérard, who if he did not speak to her spoke little to any other lady, and wandered about like a pale ghost in the background of that bright society.

Two balls; a play acted by amateurs, in which Madame de Loches took a leading part; a fête in the forest, ending in a dance in a great pavilion in the park, all bordered round with shadowy alleys and sheets of moonlight, were crowded into the first three days of the Prince's visit to Bois carré. Every one of any note in the province came to these entertainments, many people having come from Paris on purpose to show their respect for the young Prince and the cause of his family. Even officers from the neighbouring towns appeared as M. de Coigny's guests—perhaps a dangerous amusement for them, considering the way that the winds blow in France now-a-days.

No one had such a thorough, honest, artistic enjoyment of the whole thing as George Mowbray, who talked a little to the Prince, who thought him odd, and to the Spaniards, who thawed to him and found him charming, and was laying up a store of materials enough to make him independent of shaky banks in future. Yet so single-minded an artist was he that I verily believe the thought of the West Mercian Bank scarcely occurred to him once during those Bois carré days.

(To be continued.)

THE KINGDOM OF LILLIPUT.

IF Dean Swift had lived in this latter half of the nineteenth century, he might have served a double purpose, by placing the scene of his inimitable satire on the spot now occupied by the Friendly Islands in maps of the Southern Pacific, instead of in the latitude so gravely assigned to his discovery by Gulliver. The Friendly or Tonga Islands have, although a description of them may not prove so interesting, one advantage over the original Lilliput—they exist. And indeed so thoroughly do they exist in the minds of their inhabitants, that in speaking of their country they generally designate it by the name of 'Mamani'—the world. Europe, Asia, Africa, and America they class all together under the appellation of 'Papalangi,' which presents about the same idea to their minds as barbarian did to that of the ancient Roman. Commercially these islands have not much importance, as the dearth of running streams renders the manufacture of sugar difficult, although the sugar-cane grows wild everywhere. There are some small coffee plantations that bear very well; but the principal trade is in copra or dried cocoanut, of which several thousand tons are annually exported to Europe and America for conversion into oil. There are some English residents, but the bulk of the business is in the hands of two large German firms. Physically, the Tonga islanders are the finest race in the South Sea, making Europeans appear very small by comparison, and having generally the old Greek type of

face. In all their dealings they are moved either by affection or by interest, and such virtues as truth, honesty, or trustworthiness are held but in small repute among them, while thrift and economy they thoroughly despise. Themselves brave, generous, and hospitable to a fault, they are great admirers of those good qualities in others; and although capable of the greatest affection and devotion towards those whom they love, they would steal from their greatest friend where opportunity offered. All the worldly possessions of friends, they hold, should be in common. There are two religions among them, the Roman Catholic and the Wesleyan, to all the outward duties of which they are generally most attentive.

The special point that may make a short sketch of these islands interesting to English readers is the fact that their form of government is imitated from the English model, and a desire for annexation to England that has lately been growing among them. King George Tupou, the present monarch, is an old man of between eighty and ninety years of age, and besides being the first king of Tonga has the additional advantage of, in all probability, being also the last. He was only a small chief by birth, though connected with some of the most influential chiefs, and only had power over half of one of the smallest islands in the group. Little by little, through aiding other chiefs in intertribal wars, he acquired some power and reputation, though his greater

successes are mostly owing to the influence of foreigners. When the Wesleyan missionaries first came to Tonga, he was not slow to recognise the superiority of the religion they taught over that taught by the heathen priests, one of whose chief gods was the shark; and besides he saw what a support the whites would be to him if he took their part from the first. The country was then divided among several chiefs, of which the principal one was the Tui Tonga, who was said to be of divine origin, and although he did not exert much secular power had semi-divine honours paid to him. King George took the part of modern progress and religion against the old institutions of his country. He was a rude apostle, this young chief, going out on the war-path with a Bible in one hand and a club in the other, and it may be believed that he converted the heathen with wondrous rapidity. Some tribes, however, on the great island of Tongatabu long opposed him successfully. On one occasion he enlisted on his side the services of an English sloop-of-war, the *Favourite*, that touched at the Friendly Islands. The commander of the vessel headed an expedition against the stockade of Bea, situated some three miles inland, but was unfortunately killed at the beginning of the action; and his forces returned on board without having accomplished anything. Possibly because he had no right to mix himself up with intertribal wars, the English Government never attempted to avenge his death or his ill-success; and this was unfortunate for Europeans residing in the islands, as ever since the natives have been able to boast of having defeated an English man-of-war.

Some years after subjecting the whole of the Friendly Islands to his rule, King George decided that he would, in the eyes of the world, become a constitutional monarch. By this he meant that he would take away every vestige of feudal power from all the other chiefs, but that he would retain as much absolute power as he wished for himself. A Parliament was formed composed of Lords and Commons, and a short code of laws was then decided upon, by which the nation was supposed to be ruled. A row of good Government buildings was erected, including custom-house, post-office, and police-court, in which all the English forms are observed, and supreme court for the trial by jury of the more serious offences. This all sounds very fair, but in reality, although justice is sometimes enacted in the police-court, it often miscarries in important cases. In such a small country all the people know one another more or less, and the jurymen, being ignorant natives, are far more anxious to please their chief than to render justice to the merits of the case. Even in the police-court the magistrate sometimes adjourns the court, that he may consult with the King or one of his family as to whether the prisoner is to be found guilty or not guilty. The judges and other officials are most wretchedly paid, and their small salaries are often sadly in arrear, so that they are all open to bribery, and are, indeed, most modest in their demands. On one occasion the captain of a vessel landed a few cases of spirits for a white resident before he had paid duty on them, and when he did notice them the collector of customs was there before him, and already investigating their contents, which, indeed, were Holland gin. He

at once implored the collector to do nothing till he had paid the duty at the custom-house, assuring him at the same time that the fault was entirely that of the master of the vessel, although, by the laws of the country, the resident ashore alone could be punished. The collector, after much grimace, told his petitioner that he would not for the world be the cause of any loss or inconvenience to a gentleman, but that the cases of liquor should at once be removed to a safe place before anybody else saw them, when the matter would become public; nor would this accommodating gentleman take anything for his kindness except a few bottles of the liquor. As may be imagined, the customs are not a source of great revenue to his Majesty; but from other sources, principally a heavy poll-tax, there is a revenue of some fourteen thousand pounds a year. The King, his family, and friends take what they want, and the surplus is divided among the Government *employés* according to their rank. Some of these remain for years without anything.

For a long time the Wesleyan mission drew large sums, in voluntary contributions, from the friendly islanders, who, on some occasions, gave as much as thirty-two thousand pounds in one year. During these golden days the then chairman of the mission built himself a finer house than the King's, and flourished generally for a length of time. This gave rise to scandal, and the chairman had to appear before a private court of inquiry, presided over by the English Deputy-Commissioner. On this occasion King George proved the chairman's very good friend, although, in the end, he resigned his appointment. He went to New Zealand, and the

inhabitants of Tonga thought they would see him no more; but some months afterwards the son of King George died in Auckland of a disease of which he had gone to the Colonies to get cured, and the ex-chairman accompanied the body of the deceased prince back to Tonga in the German gunboat *Nautilus*, whose captain was anxious to be civil to the Tongan King. The prince had been Premier of the Friendly Islands, and the old King, knowing that he could not trust any of the native chiefs whom he had humbled and despoiled, thought he could not do better than invest his clever foreign friend with the vacant dignities, addressing him somewhat in these terms: 'Euge, missionary bone et fidelis, quia super pauca fuisti fidelis, Premier of my kingdom te constituam.' The appointment was accepted, and, with the modesty of conscious merit, the ex-rev. gentleman also annexed the portfolios of Minister of Foreign Affairs, of Public Instruction and Worship, and last, though not least, of Finance. Then, to avoid trouble, he also got himself appointed Auditor-General, and thus audited his own accounts!

To make up in some measure for the increase in expenditure that might necessarily be expected, the taxes, and principally the poll-tax, were raised, which naturally caused much dissatisfaction. The Privy Council, which consisted of the present Crown Prince, grandson of the King, of the present Premier, repeated four times over under his various titles, and of two or three old aboriginal dummies, then proclaimed several new Acts. The British Deputy-Commissioner, a very able and honest young man, at once drew attention to the illegality of these Acts, which could not become

law till they had been passed by Parliament. To this the young Crown Prince answered in the Government paper, comparing the members of the Parliament to his horses, who, when they were harnessed to his carriage, did not know which way they were to go till directed by the whip and reins of the driver. This of course was as much as to say that in Tonga the people were still too much under the influence of the great chiefs to dare do anything without first knowing their wishes; but the members of Parliament were not very well pleased with his fable. The Opposition paper printed a number of articles against the Premier, which he did not read, and detailed very exactly the grievances of the people, which did not in the least remedy them. The whites, being under consular jurisdiction, took no notice of the new Acts, but the observance of them was enforced on the natives. A number of these people, enraged at finding that foreigners paid less taxes and were better treated than they were themselves in their own country, interviewed the Deputy-Commissioner, desiring to become British subjects. This they were, of course, informed could not be done so easily; and the petitioners found themselves in trouble with their own authorities, who wanted to try them for high treason, thinking that this desire on the part of Tongans to become British subjects was the thin end of the wedge of British annexation. The Deputy-Commissioner had to interfere to prevent further mischief, as the Government wanted to employ extreme measures against these people; and this, although the Premier, himself a British subject, had some time previously tried unsuccessfully to be naturalised a German.

To prevent any funds that might be given for religious purposes being diverted to the general mission fund of the Wesleyans, by whom the Premier considered he had not been well treated, he now, with the assent of the King and Privy Council, proclaimed an independent Church of Tonga. At the same time the property of natives who were at all in arrear began to be sold off right and left by distress warrant for taxes owing; and these poor people, finding that they would soon have nothing left to live on in this world, started a petition to Queen Victoria for the removal of their Premier, whom they considered as the author of their misery, and as having been specially sent to them as a punishment for their sins. The petition was signed by some two thousand natives, and would probably have been signed by all, but that the King, fearing for the fate of his favourite, interfered, and despotically stopped the further signing of the paper, which is very easy to do in such a country by a chief of high rank. Not one European signed the petition, thinking that it would have a better chance of success with the Home authorities if signed by natives only. Not only did the King interfere to stop the signing of the petition, but he had several of the promoters arrested, maltreated, and thrown into prison. He would even have had them hanged had not the Deputy-Commissioner energetically interfered, and threatened to make it a national concern. The petition was forwarded to Sir Arthur Gordon, the High Commissioner of the Western Pacific, and by him forwarded home at the beginning of last year. Eventually it was refused, on the ground that the Premier's removal might lead to anarchy in

the country ; it was therefore decided that for the present he would be allowed to retain his position, as the lesser of two evils.

Thus the inhabitants of the Friendly Islands still have this intolerable load on their shoulders ; and however desirable a policy of expediency may be, it appears to those who were on the spot that the King and Government of Tonga have offered an insult to England by imprisoning and grossly maltreating those whose only crime was to have implored the assistance of the English Queen for redress against one of her own subjects. This insult has, possibly owing to the insignificance of the country, remained unpunished, and will not increase the prestige of the British flag, already in those parts somewhat tarnished by the Favourite affair. South Sea Islanders are not accustomed to the refinements of civilised policy ; and if one chief or one power offer a slight to another, and that slight is passed over, they at once conclude that want of strength or of courage is the cause of this forbearance. An intelligent islander,

to whom a European was once explaining the high reasons for which England sometimes forbore to chastise the offences of semi-barbarous nations, answered, ' If an angel from heaven was to come down and tell us these things, we would not believe them.' And to prove that the Tongans do not, in more than one sense, consider themselves unfit to match with the most redoubtable warriors of Britain, I will conclude with this true anecdote. When H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh last visited the colonies and South Pacific, in the *Galatea*, there was some talk of his visiting the Friendly Islands. When it was ascertained in Tonga that this visit would not take place, some disappointment was felt ; but an old lady, a relation of the King's, soon gave a satisfactory reason for the omission. ' You all know,' said she, ' that the beauty of the Tongan women is famed all over the world. Queen Victoria has heard of it, and is afraid to let her son visit us, lest he should insist on marrying one of them, and thus defeat some other match which the Queen has in view for him.'

VOYAGEUR.

'GOLDEN GIRLS.'

A Picture-Gallery.

BY ALAN MUIR, AUTHOR OF 'CHILDREN'S CHILDREN,' 'LADY BEAUTY ;
OR CHARMING TO HER LATEST DAY,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

IN WHICH FOLLY, VICE, SORROW,
DEATH, AND REPENTANCE ARE
BRIEFLY SEEN.

'EUGENE,' Sholto began, 'I am unhappy—O, very unhappy!'

'Are you?' replied Eugene, sucking his stick. 'Sorry for that.'

'I have been living a bad life,' the other continued, with a sort of frank shame about him that was creditable. 'I have been breaking my old mother's heart.'

'Have you?' replied Eugene, putting his cane to the other side of his mouth for a change. 'Sorry for that.'

'You know I have!' Sholto rejoined. 'You have heard all about me, have you not?'

'A good deal, I must say,' Eugene answered.

'Well, Eugene,' Sholto went on, with a trembling voice, 'I came to myself last night. I am going to do better.'

'Better, you say?' replied Eugene, again making a face, as he whisked a trace of sawdust from his coat. 'Have they a clothes-brush here?'

Sholto appeared not to have heard this remark, for he continued with undiminished earnestness, feeling sure that Eugene must be interested in his story.

'You remember when mother and I left Middleborough, now ten years ago—more than ten, I be-

lieve. I was an idle, good-for-nothing boy then; but I became more anxious to succeed in life after we left. I believe,' Sholto said, with something like a blush, 'that a sort of boyish attachment stirred me up. I wanted to rise in life, and marry, and all the rest. I resolved to be a doctor, and my mother favoured the idea, and for several years I worked hard. We met once or twice during that time, you remember. My mother went to live with a sister who was as poor as herself, and invalided as well. However, we were happy enough, and I worked on, and do you know, Eugene, for years that silly childish love-dream was the motive which urged me on! At last I came up here to King's College, and entered the medical school. It was hard work for poor mother to pay for me; but she did it without a murmur—indeed joyfully. For a time I worked on in London steadily enough; but at last one unlucky day I failed in an examination—failed badly—and I was greatly dispirited. A fellow whom I knew well, seeing my depression, advised me to go in for a little gaiety, and unfortunately I took his advice. You know how strictly I had been brought up. I had never seen the inside of a theatre, and of what is called "life" I knew no more than a baby. It was like a burst of enchantment to me, when all at once I plunged

into the gaiety of London—at least into such gaiety as a poor medical student could command. Perhaps had I been earlier made familiar, even slightly, with the scenes on which I now entered, the effect upon me would not have been so great. Being what I was—a raw country lad, with a sharp appetite for life and its pleasures—I was dazzled and overcome. I need not tell you all that followed. I went down hill rather fast, Eugene. You know there is always a wild set among medicals, and the wild set I had hitherto kept clear of. Now I went in for them with a rush. I forgot everything I had been taught, and everything that I really loved in my heart. For the next few months I was not myself—and O, Eugene! when I think now of the life I led, so miserable in its very excitement—miserable even while I was leading it—and so degrading to look back upon, I sometimes feel ready for very shame to go on at it again—anywhere—anyhow—and end as I began!

'I should not advise you to do that,' Eugene remarked, with great composure. 'It would be foolish.'

'Upon various pretexts I got money from mother,' continued Sholto. 'I squandered it in dissipation—wrote begging for more—described myself as working hard when I was doing nothing, left my fees unpaid, made out lists of expensive books which I wanted, and, having got the money, had another fling until it was spent. That has been going on for several months, and the reading I have done is next to nothing. Only two days ago mother enclosed me ten pounds, telling me that it was really the last she could send me for a long time, as she had actually sold her watch

and chain to get it for me. Now think how I must be falling! I had begun betting in a small way, and a few occasional successes had led me to imagine that I might fill my purse by this means, and I resolved to have a try that night. With mother's money! The price of her watch! Think of it, Eugene! I was just starting from home when a man looked in upon me, who a few months before had been one of our fast fellows. He was kind-hearted, I fancy, but after living a reckless life, he had finished by marrying a penniless girl before he had "passed," and the result was that he never passed at all, and was now living almost in beggary with a delicate wife and two hungry children. After telling me a pitiful story of his distress (and indeed he looked like death at the moment) he ended by asking if, for the love of God, I could lend him five pounds to prevent his wife and children being turned into the street. I had the two fives in my pocket, and I wanted a good margin to be able to stand against temporary loss until luck turned; but somehow I could not resist his hollow voice and death-like face. I gave him one bank-note and kept the other for myself; and he went to his family and I to my companions.'

Sholto paused for a few minutes. Then bending his head a little towards Eugene, he said,

'At half-past three this morning I found myself opposite this very house—half drunk, and yet growing sober by the very pressure of shame and misery—with just one shilling in my pocket, and not a farthing in the world beside. I had passed the worst night I had ever known—the wildest—the most wretched to look back upon!'

Sholto's head fell on his breast,

and Eugene regarded him with pity, interest, and aversion all in one look.

'Do you know, Eugene, my first thought was Westminster Bridge! I even took my mother's letter out of my pocket and tore it up, so that I might not be identified. I wandered wildly along, making, as I supposed, for the river, until I was in one of the low streets of Pimlico. Then I was somewhat aroused from my stupor by noticing that I was passing the house where my friend lived—a miserable place, where they were crowded together, children and all, in two wretched parlours. A light burned in the window, and a woman was hurrying in at the door as I passed. I cannot tell why, but I followed her into the house, and she, turning round, recognised me by a candle which burned in the hall.

"Go in," she said, in a low voice; "go in at once."

'I went into the parlour. By the dim light that streamed in from the bedroom I could see two children huddled upon the sofa and sleeping. Looking into the bedroom itself, this is what I saw. My friend lying in his bed at his last gasp, and his poor wife beside him holding his hand and wiping his forehead, while the tears ran down her cheeks—tears which he would never notice more. He had caused her to shed many. I suppose she thought I was the doctor, for whom she had just sent, for she motioned me with her hand to make no noise, in the way people do when they mean that the last moment of the dying must not be disturbed.

'I walked to the other side of the bed. The brandy was still in my head. My steps and sight were uncertain, and my reason was only half my own. But even to my blunted faculties the contrast

was awful. The white face, with the last flicker of life upon it; the thin woman holding back her tears for love of the man who had squandered away her happiness as well as his own; the miserable room; and then, what was still in my brain and printed on my sight, the laughter and the oaths, the glare of the rooms I had lately been in, the faces, the wild carouse; O, it was such a contrast as might make a hell, and the imaginary scene was to me as vivid as the real one before my eyes.

"Hush!" the woman said, in a low piercing whisper. "Be still!" she held up her finger. Then I saw her clasp his hand tighter and bend down over him; she knew that he was gone, and with a cry, "*O Edward, my Edward!*" she cast herself on his vacant breast, just as if he had been the guide and the joy of her life, and had departed in honour and peace.

'I comforted her as I best could; and I left the house in a state of feeling such as I could not have believed possible had I not experienced it. But amidst all there was one ray of comfort. I had not refused my friend his last miserable request; he had not died through my selfishness; and remembering this I got my first touch of relief, and as I walked the lonely street I cried like a child.

'I think now those tears saved me from madness or from suicide. I managed to get back to my lodging, where as I arrived the servant was opening the house. I rushed to my room and cast myself on the sofa, where I must have lain two hours, not asleep, but like one stunned, or suffering from brain concussion.

'As I came to myself somewhat, I saw lying on the table before me a letter from my mother. I

must have been still under the influence of drink, for I looked at the envelope for a long time, wishing to know what it contained, and yet never stretching out my hand for it. At last I opened it. The letter was occupied with a few gentle remonstrances concerning my extravagance, and ten times as many words of trust and tenderness. These touched me even then, but not most deeply. The letter enclosed a photograph which mother (it must have been for reasons of her own) had procured for me; and if she judged that the sight of it would move me she judged rightly. Only she could not have known that I should see it at this dreadful hour!

'Eugene,' said Sholto, bending towards his friend again, 'all these years I have been in love with a girl—I have not seen her more than twice in five years—I don't suppose there is the least chance that I shall ever know her, much less marry her. She is a wealthy girl, a prize for a peer, out of my reach in many ways.'

(Sholto did not observe an ironical smile playing upon his friend's lip.)

'But I love her. She is the image of goodness and truth to me; and when this morning I took that photograph in my hand, and looked at her sweet face full of grace and purity and affection, I think I felt for the first time what vice and shame really are. I hated myself. I felt as if I were shooting down some precipice of guilt and disgrace, and she standing immovable above, a figure of celestial purity.'

'I clenched my hands. I loathed myself. For another moment the thought of the river came over me, and an end which would for ever wipe out my shame. But again my eyes fell on the picture.'

'It was like an angel's face. It seemed to be shaping itself into love and pity. It seemed to say that I had not yet fallen so far but there was still hope and the love of the good for me.'

'A living face could not have been more expressive. An audible voice could not have been more intelligible. I caught the picture up, and kissed it, and for the second time that morning I burst out weeping. When I was a little recovered I saw the photograph all stained and blurred with my tears.'

'But I was forgiven! I had hope and strength in my heart. I stood up and raised my hands to heaven, and I accepted the forgiveness which God, through His angel, had sent to me. I resolved that I would never again think of the black past, and that life should be wrenched from me before I again allowed vice to have the mastery over me.'

'Penniless, wretched as I was, dark as were my prospects, I felt brave and happy. The new thought within me was greater than any outward circumstances. I felt as if I had conquered life already. It was wonderful the thoughts that ran through me—the ecstasy! the resolution! the fearlessness!

'And now, Eugene, my better life has begun. I am glad to tell you all this because we have been friends so long; and, besides, it does me good to open my heart to any one. Now you can do me a great kindness. I am without a sovereign in the world. I dare not write to my mother. Can you—will you—lend me ten pounds to help me until I have made my way a little? I know you can, and will.'

'You may be sure I would if I could,' replied Eugene. 'I have been greatly interested in your

story, Sholto. I think you need not have reproached yourself so much ; but look here—' Eugene opened his purse carefully, not letting Sholto see its contents. 'Yes, I have one sovereign. That I can lend you. Pay me when you please.'

Sholto, with a downcast face, took the sovereign, thanking his friend, and before he could speak again, Eugene looked at his watch and exclaimed,

'I am late, Sholto. I must run. Good-bye. Write to me some day—'

And he was off, almost before the other could wish him farewell. So Eugene Ruddock, well dressed and refined, went his way. His business was the purchase of a diamond ring, and already he was imagining the effect of it upon his white finger. Sholto, looking depressed and disappointed, stepped out a moment later, and paced his way slowly back to his lodging. Already that sovereign in his pocket was suggesting a return to the haunts of the night before, while Eugene's cool selfishness was raising every rebellious impulse of his nature. There were better thoughts in poor Sholto's breast, too—struggles, wishes, and prayers.

'What a wreck Sholto is!' Eugene thought. 'I wonder these fellows cannot see that vice does not pay.'

And Sholto, pacing along the Strand, and feeling his tempter upon him once more, was grasping at his good resolution like a man who is drowning.

O, how many thousand, thousand times, under various costumes, has the same solemn Comedy been gravely performed since the day when All-seeing Eyes marked 'two men' going up into the Temple to pray!

CHAPTER XXII.

SOCIETY : GOOD, BAD, AND
INDIFFERENT.

'A WAGER of twenty to one, madam! gold against silver; in other words, shillings against sovereigns—twenty sovereigns against twenty shillings, madam! And your obedient servant, sitting here before you, was down for the twenty sovereigns, while little Merrythought might win gold, but could only lose silver.'

At a large garden-party at Sir John Sanctuary's, our former acquaintance, Major Sanctuary, in great spirits and full of talk, was enlightening an admiring circle which had gathered round him. There was a kind of glossy shabbiness about the Major, an appearance of having burnished up old clothes with care for a grand occasion. Otherwise Major Sanctuary looked but little changed—a trifle grayer, a shade more gaunt, but nothing else.

'Merrythought is only our nickname for him at the club. His real name is Russell,' he continued, looking round with great animation. 'A more gambling little dog you could not meet. This is how it came about. Merrythought and I had been sitting on Brighton promenade—King's-road, you know—watching the people walk and drive up and down. Says he, "I know half the company." "Merrythought," I said, "it is impossible at your time of life that you can know as many men as I do." "Two to your one," says he. "Merry," I answered, "I deny it." "Not the first time a fact has been denied," he replies. "Tell you what," said I, "I'll wager you twenty sovereigns to twenty shillings that more acquaintances of mine than of yours pass this seat in the next half-hour." "Done!" cried Merrythought.

"What time is it?" I asked. "Eight minutes to one," says he. "Good!" cried I; "we shall go on to twenty-two minutes past." We began, madam. At first I went off well, for who should go by but old Lady Dolly Vernon and her three daughters, maypole girls, but I was pleased to see 'em just then. "How d'ye feel, Merry?" says I, when begad, madam, before the words were out of my mouth, five young bucks walking abreast came up and saluted him! "Ha, ha, Major!" says he. However, at the end of ten minutes I was nine ahead. Good! But next minute I saw a girls' school coming our way—more pairs of skirts than I could count. You will scarcely believe it, madam, but Merry thought bowed to every girl of 'em, and the girls to him; and the fellow told me he knew every girl of 'em, his second cousin having been at school there. "Merry," said I, "I wish my old regiment was quartered here!" Well, madam, to make a long story short, at seventeen minutes past Merry thought was seven ahead, and the company getting thin. "Hand over," he calls out. "Wait," I said. Just then I saw a little girl, daughter of a friend, running up to me. "How are you, dear?" I said. "*One more, Merry.* How is your mother?" "O, mother is over there," the child answered, "and all of us are with her." "All of you?" I said. "Fanny," I continued, whispering the child, "run and tell mother I have got a touch of the gout, but I want to see her and all the children—mind you say *all* the children—and at once, for I have to leave." Off the child ran. Up comes the mother, pleased at the attention, and all her brood with her. Ladies and gentlemen, the Major said, now addressing the whole group of listeners, 'you will hardly be-

lieve it, but I won by the baby, a child not two months old; and the last of the shillings is in my pocket this moment!"

With a jocose and opulent air the Major rose from his seat and walked with a fine step across the lawn, shaking with laughter over his own story, and the little group that had gathered round him melted away.

As most of our old friends, and some new ones, are in the company, we have here a convenient opportunity of renewing our several acquaintances. And we may mark what ten years have done for our Golden Girls and their anxious friends.

First let us introduce ourselves to Sir John Sanctuary himself, who stands at the foot of a flight of steps receiving his guests. Sir John was an undersized man, squab, with a red face and one sleeve pinned against his breast. As he welcomed each successive visitor he spoke in a short scolding tone, snapping his words, which were uttered in a very loud key. There was a curious resemblance to the manner of his cousin the Major, with this difference, that while the Major's address had something in it of effort and imitation, the Baronet's was plainly original, unstudied, and the outcome of an eccentric character. But amidst his abruptness he was well-bred, and he managed to make his guests feel at ease, when that might have been least of all expected.

Beside him stood his son Robert Sanctuary. He was a tall, raw-looking youth, with red hair, freckled complexion, great sunburnt hands, and a loud voice, such as might have been trained in the fields. There was animal strength about the young fellow, and he had a good-natured aspect; but culture had done nothing for

him. Perhaps Esau was something of his type, for young Sanctuary was without doubt endowed with animal qualities both in virtue and in vice. Yet even in him there was some trace of the ease of good society, and like his father he was able, when he chose, to make strangers feel at home.

Close at hand stood two girls, one dressed in dark blue and the other in pale green, the blue girl being attired with great richness, while her companion's dress was far from new. These girls were talking together with the air of bosom friends, and while the girl in blue seemed to have an eye upon young Robert Sanctuary, he—never glancing at her—would often exchange a word with the girl in green. And the girl in green always brightened up when Bob Sanctuary spoke to her; and when her face brightened in this way it was a taking face, lit up either by actual good-humour or the resolve to appear pleasant. No wonder that Bob Sanctuary when he looked once looked twice, and when he looked twice looked as many more times as he decently could.

The brightly-dressed girl in blue was Lucy Ruddock, and the poorly dressed girl in green was Victoria Sanctuary. Victoria the far-sighted Beatrice Ruddock long ago perceived to have been destined by her father the Major as future wife for Eugene. Lucy, her fond mother hoped, would one day be presented at Court as Lady Sanctuary. For ten years have not altered the plans of these plotting parents, and on this very day, and in this very garden, Major Sanctuary and Beatrice Ruddock are hoping that their separate little schemes will be brought nearer to success.

For though ten years turns boys and girls into men and wo-

men, it is surprising how lightly such a period deals with those who are men and women already. Beatrice Ruddock at forty-five is changed from what she was at thirty-five; but the change is not very marked. She is still a handsome woman. Daniel, who is at her side, somewhat afraid of the fine company, is only a little more round-shouldered, and a shade more cunning in the face. And Jerome Dawe, who is here also, has accomplished the journey from eight-and-fifty to eight-and-sixty with small outward signs of wear and tear. Jerome's legs still do their work well; his portly trunk and large head are still erect. A few specks of snuff lie on the frill of his shirt, just as when we saw him last. Even the ebony stick Shakespeare has suffered no more serious change than the loss of a little colour on the crown of the head—growing bald, like the original. For anything appearances tell, Jerome Dawe might have been an eighth sleeper these ten years, and the spell might this moment have been broken.

Now over all the gay company a flutter passes. Every eye turns towards the flight of steps, where four visitors have all at once appeared. First comes a tall young lady with light strong step, and eyes that somehow fix you before you mark any other feature: clear brave eyes, nobly set, which look as if they could equally express truth, courage, or anger, but never a base emotion.

'How do you do, Miss Walsingham?' Sir John says. 'Very pleasant to see you. You are a stranger in my house.'

For Mildred Walsingham is a Golden Girl, and even the blunt Baronet, who is one thing to all men, grows deferential as he salutes the great heiress.

'Where is your sister?' he asked, looking round.

'Violet must not walk. Sir John,' Mildred answered, with a touch of sadness in her manner. 'She has gone round in her chair, and will be here presently.'

Behind Mildred came our old friends the Badger family. Sally, happily recovered from her fever, for the past ten years had fought the battle of life, which was still raging sore around her. Sally's hair had grown gray, and her features were more marked; but her carriage was as vigorous and as emblematic of a warlike character as ever; while her dress, though somewhat improved from former days, still showed signs of poverty. Samuel Badger had scarcely changed a hair or a feature; but Hector was grown a young man, ill-dressed, awkward, and plainly not at ease in prospect of the fine company.

'Sammy, Sammy!' Mrs. Badger whispered, before they reached the Baronet, 'you have sat on the tail of your coat! It is so dreadfully creased. How could you do it?'

'My love,' Samuel Badger replied, trying to twist his head over his left shoulder, 'I don't see any crease.'

'You are looking over the wrong shoulder, Sammy,' retorted his wife. 'There is a crease that might have been made with a mangle.'

'That's the worst of a tail,' remarked poor Samuel Badger, in semi-soliloquy. 'Do what you will, your tail always gets on the chair before yourself. I declare, Sally, I will begin to wear cut-away coats!'

'Not while I am spared,' rejoined Mrs. Badger. 'Hector!'—she spoke in the same fierce sort of whisper—'do hold up your head. And in the name of gra-

cious goodness, Hector, what have you got in your pocket? You stick out like a carpet-bag!'

'Only a book, mother,' Hector replied, looking thoroughly miserable.

'Only a book! What do you want with books now?' his mother answered. 'By the look of your coat I should think it must be a family Bible.'

'No such thing, mother,' retorted Hector, resenting this sarcasm. 'It is only a volume of Johnson's *Dictionary*.'

'A volume of Johnson's *Dictionary*!' his mother repeated, raising her eyes, as if appealing to some superior being for sympathy. Then she addressed her son with scathing irony: 'I suppose you are going to question the company, Hector, to see how they spell?'

'I only wanted to look into it, mother, for one or two things, if I had a spare moment.'

'I do think,' Sally Badger exclaimed, 'Providence ought to help me. It is out of all reason. Husband and son! Never was a woman so distracted!'

Happily for all parties they had now advanced to where the Baronet was standing, and salutations had to be performed. Through this part of the ceremony Sally went with considerable dignity; but when her husband, responding to Sir John Sanctuary's welcome, said, 'How do you do, Sir John? Allow me to congratulate you upon your pelargoniums,' Sally managed to pull him away forcibly, but with such adroitness as not to attract attention.

'They are not pelargoniums at all, Sammy.'

'My love, I thought they were.'

Meanwhile Hector, in a state of nervous confusion which almost

amounted to the abolition of reason, made his obeisance; but, while executing his part of the performance, the unhappy young man trod upon the Baronet's toe. Sir John Sanctuary manifested so much anguish and Hector was so horrified that, to avoid a repetition of the mishap, he made a wild circular leap away from his host. The rapidity of his movements brought the pocket with the dictionary flying out from his person in a kind of outer circle; and the volume struck Sir John smartly in the ribs, disturbing his bodily equilibrium, and leaving him in momentary doubt whether or not he was the victim of an assault.

Sally saw all in a kind of controlled delirium.

'Now will you both,' she said, following her husband and her son, and addressing them with the composure of one who masters strong emotion—'*will* you both go somewhere, and keep quiet until I come to you? Any corner will do.'

CHAPTER XXIII.

IN WHICH OUR GOLDEN GIRL IS
SURROUNDED BY LOVERS AND
WORSHIPPERS.

EVERYBODY for ten miles round was at Sir John Sanctuary's garden-party. It was a gay scene enough. Two or three croquet sets and one or two games of Badminton were going on; and there was also a band which enlivened the air with music, not of very fine quality, but still the sound was agreeable. Amidst all the flutter of the well-dressed crowd, however, and their various amusements, one peculiar circumstance was to be noticed. There was a constant tendency among the

visitors to gather into small knots, these knots being clustered at a civil but interested distance round one central group, which, by the going and coming of different people, maintained its size undiminished. So we have seen a princess making the circuit of a picture-gallery with her attendants, and behind these a following of the curious, who may talk to each other, but their eyes and attention are upon the princess. In our central group there was no princess, but what in Middleborough formed an excellent substitute—a Golden Girl.

Mildred Walsingham was charmingly dressed. Her gown was white, with maize trimmings, and she wore the most coquettish little straw hat that ever was seen, flat in the crown, with two broad white streamers, understood to be strings. It was one of those costumes that look sweetly simple and even inexpensive, but the practised female eye would have recognised it at once as a costly bit of simplicity. In fact, it was the dress of the day; all the women said so, and being conspicuous it enabled admirers to find Mildred wherever she might be. The girl looked very handsome, and when the young men, mindful of her incalculable fortune, marked her queenly figure and her patrician face, O, believe me, many hearts beat high at the sight of her. And many young fellows pictured themselves seated beside Mildred, with flying steeds of glossy coat in front and clouds of dust behind. Carriage and horses paid for with *her* money. The world all before the bridegroom and the bride. The world paved with the gold of the Golden Girl! And were these young fellows wrong? I hope not. Why, this novel of *Golden Girls* was written to teach young gentlemen to catch heiresses; and

some day it shall be followed by another didactic history, called *Golden Boys*; and when these two works are complete, every lad in England will be able to hook a rich wife; and every lass will be able, by lifting her white little hand, to secure a carriage fortune. So, young ladies and gentlemen, do not waste your time over merely amusing novels like those of Mr. Payn and Mr. Black, which only make you forget yourselves. Study me, a dull, plodding penman, who work my way to a useful end, like a mule on a country road.

These young gentlemen just described, on the principle of 'Nothing venture nothing have,' addressed Mildred Walsingham as often and as winningly as possible. She did not repel these advances, but a smile played over her lip at times when her young admirers were most pressing. A young admirer, quick to draw conclusions, might not have been encouraged by the smile. There was a tincture of cynicism in it. Mildred was too shrewd for the flatteries poured upon her. A simpleton might have thought herself Beauty's Queen; but observing Mildred noticed that a neighbour's governess, the orphan of a clergyman, a girl of great loveliness, was left alone all the afternoon. The young men followed Mildred. Mildred said to herself,

'It is not my looks, for I am not so pretty; nor my manner, for I am not so engaging. Aha! it is my money these lads love.'

In short, had any young fellow flirted with the governess, and devoted himself to her, he would have been the man who that day would have made the most effectual inroad upon the affection of Mildred Walsingham. No young fellow knew that secret. Every

young fellow fluttered like a moth about the Golden Girl.

By and by Mildred sauntered across the lawn to where her sister's invalid-chair was drawn up, close beside the band. All signs of cynicism vanished as she came beside her sister and took the thin hand caressingly.

'Little one'—she often called Violet so—'are you enjoying yourself?'

Violet Walsingham was a young woman now, and inexpressibly lovely. There was a depth of expression in her eyes, which were a kind of porcelain blue, deep, still, and exquisitely clear. She had a wealth of dark hair, wonderfully long eyelashes, and her lips could run into the archest smile. But she still looked frail and ready to vanish; and there was a sadness in her face which that arch smile relieved only as one ray breaking through a rent in the cloud relieves a sunless sky.

'Little one, are you enjoying yourself?'

It is a beam of sunshine indeed that comes across her face; it is a celestial light that passes into the deep eyes. It is a smile of heavenly sweetness that plays upon her lips. Mildred is all in all to the sick girl. She does not tell Mildred so, lest she should weary her, but there is no brightness for Violet when Mildred is away. She has been following the white gown all over the lawn, watching its every turn, delighted if Mildred seems happy, but always with a kind of hope, not expressed to herself, that Mildred will not forget her, as she lies there alone. And Mildred does not forget, and her cold icy expression melts the moment she meets her sister's eyes, and the two take hands with a natural tenderness which is pleasant to see.

'It is such fun here,' cries Violet. 'I have been watching that old gentleman; he gets so angry if they croquet his ball, and that girl in pink seems to delight in teasing him. There she goes again! O, do look at him!'

How quickly the plaintive face lights up with fun! how pleasantly her voice tinkles with merriment! Mildred catches the infection and laughs too, but there is a sound of pure fun in Violet's laugh which Mildred cannot reach. And now the knots of people begin to melt into one; a circle forms around the Golden Girls; actually there stand in it Hector Badger, Bob Sanctuary, and Eugene Ruddock. In its outer ring are Major Sanctuary, Sir John, Beatrice, and the fearless Sally Badger. Now, for this little bit of sport—plot and counterplot, attack and defence—I must and will have a fresh chapter. Just as in a well-arranged comedy each set of actors come to the front in turn, and have the stage to themselves, so we shall give a separate space to fathers, mothers, lovers, and Golden Girls, playing their successive parts.

CHAPTER XXIV.

IN WHICH ELDERLY LOVERS OF THE WORLD ARE SEEN DOING THEIR KIND.

THE elders first.

'Dear Sir John,' Beatrice Ruddock said, in her blindest voice, 'I wish above all things to see your paintings. I am positively dying for a sight of them.'

'I am no painter,' the Baronet replied—'not by education. I love the art, but I was never taught how to hold a brush or mix a colour. Still I have a few

daubs, and my friends are good enough to be pleased with them.'

'And your son, Sir John; he is an artist, is he not?'

Clever Beatrice knows well that the dream of Sir John's life is that his son shall be a great painter, and she knows, too, that Bob Sanctuary is as likely to turn out a painter as a colt is likely to play the fiddle. But Mrs. Ruddock takes good care never to hint that the fond father, who hopes that time and study may develop genius in the lad's breast, is nursing a delusion. Mrs. Ruddock has a meaning in everything she says and does. So she asks if Bob Sanctuary be not an artist, and waits for the answer in sweet simplicity.

'In time I hope he will paint,' Sir John answered. 'I am going to take him the round of the Continental galleries, and to try to develop his taste.'

'How delightful!' murmured Beatrice; 'Munich, Dresden, Milan, Rome. O, it is quite a paradise of an idea!'

'Hope we shall enjoy it,' the Baronet said bluntly. 'Hope it will turn out well.'

'Do you know, Sir John,' Beatrice continued sweetly, 'my daughter Lucy is just beginning to show the prettiest and the most interesting fancy for art. I want to give her a little training too; but my lazy husband will not leave home, and so Lucy and I must make our little tour as best we can. We might meet, Sir John, somewhere; and while the two young people sauntered round the galleries, why, Sir John, you and I—sober, old-fashioned people—might sit together and entertain each other with our neighbours' failings and our own virtues. Might we not?'

Which little question Beatrice put laughingly and insinuatingly

'Upon my word,' the Baronet cried, looking with animation into the lady's handsome face, 'I consider it a capital thought. Stay,' he added humorously, 'I wanted to study a little myself. I am afraid, under the circumstances you propose, I should forget the pictures altogether!'

The Baronet made a bow very gallant and facetious, and Beatrice responded with just the little laugh and hint of a blush which befitted the occasion. And Sir John Sanctuary thought at the moment that perhaps in such society his son's dormant love of art might be quickened. Had Sir John been a woman he would have seen matrimony in Beatrice's dulcet phrases, as plainly as a marksman sees his target. But Sir John belonged to the sex which is not always on the lookout for love and marriage, and which accordingly is sometimes gently and delicately fooled into a trap with eyes wide open. O winsome, specious Beatrice Ruddock! O rare novel mine of *Golden Girls*, which shall teach all the world how to marry or not marry, but wisely either way!

While this ingenious dialogue went on Major Sanctuary made his way to the side of Eugene.

'How d'ye do, my boy?' he said, laying his hand on the young man's shoulder. 'Done with Oxford yet?'

'Not yet—not for eighteen months,' answered Eugene, who was adjusting his necktie and working his chin about in his final way.

'And when you have done, what then, my boy? Church? State? Army? Navy? Physic? Law? In a word sir,' the Major called out, as if irritated at the number of alternatives he had run up, 'what are you going to be?'

'Never thought about it,' re-

plied Eugene, with a languid and superfine air. 'Nevaw,' was his reply phonetically. 'Scarcely know—you know.' He looked approvingly at the toe of his faultless boot.

'Tell you what, sir,' the Major cried, 'you ought to live in town, sir. Get in among people of fashion, sir. With your air and your habits—confound it, sir!' the Major said, with an air of exasperation, 'you *ought* to be among people of fashion! I could introduce you to dozens of men in my set; spirited well-behaved men! It is an expensive set, mine; money flies like—' Here the Major nervously twitched a frayed shirt-cuff out of sight, and not finding the simile for which he sought, wound up in this way: 'They are spirited well-behaved men, sir, and you ought to be among them.'

Eugene not entering into this dashing proposal, a pause followed, which enabled the Major to remember something all at once.

'I quite forgot! With this lively conversation I *quite* forgot! My daughter—Victoria—asked me to coax you to be her partner in a croquet set. I said "No, make your sets for yourselves," said I. But here she comes, and she will never forgive me if I have not secured you.'

As a matter of fact, Miss Sanctuary was standing perfectly still, with her back full upon Eugene, and she and her cousin Bob were talking together in an interested way, so that the Major was forced to call out,

'Victoria! Victoria! Mr. Ruddock is waiting for you.'

'Papa,' the girl whispered to him reproachfully, 'I don't want to play with Mr. Ruddock. Bob and I were going to look at the horses. It is provoking!'

The Major did not say,

'Victoria, your cousin Robert will be a poor baronet one day, and there could be no greater madness than for you and him to fall in love. Eugene Ruddock will be a man of fortune, and just the husband for you. Therefore I, your anxious parent, am trying to disentangle you from your cousin, and to entangle you with my excellent young friend.'

The Major did not say this—in fact, the Major did not say anything at all, for a spy was watching them, and at this point an adroit and fearless player entered into the little matrimonial game.

'Eugene,' Mrs. Ruddock said, laying her hand on her boy's shoulder, 'I think Miss Walsingham rather wants to make up a set for Badminton. Go and ask if you can be of use to her.'

Off Eugene darted, well pleased to escape from the Major's rather too artful snare. Off went Victoria and Bob, laughing and manifesting a tendency to lay their heads side by side; and they disappeared round a little plantation and were gone.

The Major looked very blank.

'This woman can turn one's little plans topsy-turvy when she pleases,' he said to himself. The wonder is he did not say it aloud, for in his vexation he struck the grass with his cane.

But adroit and fearless Beatrice Ruddock, vigilant still, was not going to vex the Major more than was absolutely necessary, not she.

'You see, Major,' she said, continuing her speech with the lightest and most unembarrassed of laughs, 'if we old people did not look after these boys and girls they would never speak to each other, but would draw up in opposite lines, finger in mouth, like children at a school-treat before the cake comes in!'

'Well, now,' the Major said

to himself, 'this is uncommon effrontery. This is a very impudent woman.'

But he was no match for Beatrice. Looking straight into his disturbed face, with the blindest unconsciousness that anything could possibly have happened to vex him, and with the most artless assumption that he was in a sportive mood, she put her arm through his, and rambled laughingly on,

'It was not *our* way, Major, when we were boys and girls—long ago. We did not need so much prompting, did we?'

The Major looked at her—indignant still. But her complete innocence, his own gallantry, and besides a natural humour of good-fellowship which he could never quite overcome, all fought for her.

'You are right, ma'am,' he cried, with his usual gaiety. 'We had ten times the life of these young sparks in our day.'



CHAPTER XXV.

IN WHICH MR. INDIFFERENCE (ALIAS HECTOR BADGER), MR. AWKWARD (ALIAS BOB SANCTUARY), AND MR. PERFECT POLISH (ALIAS EUGENE RUDDOCK) TRY THEIR FORTUNE WITH A 'GOLDEN GIRL.'

WE shift our kaleidoscope to see how the younger folk profit by the example and the instruction of their elders. Eugene Ruddock has for years been taught that Mildred Walsingham is his prize in life, and Eugene accepts the responsibility thus laid upon him. Bob Sanctuary has been taught a similar lesson, but not by such diligent teachers. His father is not a money-worshipper; but, knowing how impoverished his estate is, he reasonably thinks that a Golden

Girl would make a capital wife for his son, and he has bid Bob be civil to her. Even Sally Badger, though she has no actual hope of success, still, on her principle of going in for everything, has told Hector a hundred times that if he lets anybody run off with Mildred, under his very nose, and with his opportunities of winning her heart, he would be a stupid fool.

'But, you know, Hector,' Mrs. Badger would say, recognising Fact, with a pensive air, 'that is just what you are.'

And now these three—Hector, Bob, and Eugene—are drawing near to Mildred, each to play his part. Eugene comes willingly and of his own purpose, the other two because Authority has ordered them so to do. Hector Badger and Bob Sanctuary did not spend much time over their part of the business.

'Mildred,' Hector said, addressing her just as he would have done at home, and then blushing and correcting himself as he remembered the company—'Miss Walsingham, can I do anything for you, or help to amuse you? If not, I think I will not stay here, because the sun is rather hot.'

'I don't want you,' Mildred replied pleasantly. She rather liked Hector, in his degree.

Hector walked reflectively away, his mother's eyes following him with a look of confirmed despair.

'There you go,' Sally said to herself. 'If I do not haul and drag you up to good fortune—as a prisoner is hauled to gaol—you will never have any good fortune at all.'

Bob Sanctuary came up next, like the better *Cloten* that he was, coltish and awkward; and yet the awkwardness of a gentleman

is something different from the awkwardness of a bumpkin.

'Warm day, Miss Sanctuary. Precious hot, ain't it?'

'I like the sun,' Mildred remarked.

'Very good. Is there anything else you would like?'

Bob asked this as if the sun were a kind of refreshment handed about on plates, and possibly Mildred might fancy some other heavenly body as well.

'Nothing else,' Mildred answered, smiling.

'Come and see the horses,' Bob said, with a sideward motion of his head in the direction of the stables. 'You are fond of horses, ain't you?'

'Not very.'

'Pity. Tell you who is, though: my cousin Vic. Do you know my cousin Vic?'

'A little.'

'Well, she is fond of horses, and horses of her. To see her talk to a horse, and stroke him, and put her cheek down beside his face—she does, you know—and to see the horse look at her, knowing she is a friend, it's a pretty sight, I can tell you!'

'I am sure of it,' Mildred replied.

'For, you know,' Bob continued, 'every girl that's worth knowing or talking to is fond of horses—stop, though,' he added, remembering the admission Mildred had just made; 'not every girl. Not yourself, for instance. The fact is, Miss Walsingham, I see I am not going to make much of this conversation; and if I stay here any longer I am sure to commit some other blunder—sure to; so I leave you in better care.'

He waved his hand at Eugene, and walked off laughing; and Mildred was disposed to like him for his roughness and good feeling so curiously mingled.

Up came Eugene, with a dancing step, tripping on his toes, a knight of the carpet and the lawn, gloved, hatted, booted, and neck-tied to admiration.

'I don't care for horses either.'

To this introductory remark Mildred vouchsafed no reply; but Eugene, whose self-opinion was not easily shaken, either did not or would not notice her coldness.

He talked to her and to Violet with considerable success; and the cunning little fellow inserted his morsels of flattery so cleverly, and managed to bring up so many subjects in which the girls were interested, and he heard their opinions with so much attention, that it was impossible not to pronounce him agreeable; for Eugene made it a study to be liked in society, and he succeeded. Reader, this curious world of ours is divided between those who seem to be good and those who are good, and between those who in the nature of things ought to be liked and those who are liked as a matter of fact.

Well established in his own self-conceit, Eugene, finding that he was left alone with the Golden Girls, began to tell them about his encounter with Sholto Alexander in the Strand. Violet had not seen Sholto, except on rare occasions, since his childhood, and Mildred was by no means intimate with him. Eugene spoke of him with an air half of patronage, half of pity; but, never dreaming that the subject could be of more than passing interest to his hearers, he did not observe that at the mention of Sholto's name Mildred's face flushed a painful scarlet, which she tried to hide by affecting to disentangle a bit of her maize fringe. Eugene did, indeed, remark that Violet set her eyes on him, and listened very

earnestly; but he thought nothing of that.

Of Sholto's story he told them not a little, although, to do Eugene justice, he withheld the parts which were least creditable. In his genteel Pharisaic style, Eugene said that Publican Sholto was idle and extravagant, had squandered his mother's money, and was now penniless. There was something of malice in his mind, which broke out in the narrative.

'I am very sorry for him,' Violet said, with tears in her eyes. 'And I am sorry for Mrs. Alexander. She is always so kind and so good.'

'Sholto will never come to good,' Eugene remarked. 'At least I am afraid he will not. He will have to go the way of all these wild medical students, and take an appointment in some horrid climate, and, after killing others, be killed himself—some place like the Bight of Benin.'

'Where is the Bight of Benin?' Mildred asked, turning round sharp.

'In Africa,' Eugene replied. 'Not a very well-known place. Have you ever heard the old rhyme?'

To give greater effect to his quotation, Eugene beat time with the tip of his polished boot as he tripped off the couplet—

"The Bight of Benin,
One comes out where a hundred go in."

That will be Sholto's end.'

'Poor Sholto!' Violet said, with eyes full of concern. 'I do not like to hear about it. Perhaps he will begin to do better.'

'Perhaps,' replied Eugene, shaking his head like King Solomon—'perhaps he will. Perhaps he won't. Anyhow we cannot help him. His poverty will pull him down. Poor fellows never rise unless they are very

steady. I do not believe Sholto will ever come to any good. I am sorry too'—Eugene again tapped the grass with his toe, and became a little absorbed as he worked out an imaginary figure—'for Sholto was not a bad sort of fellow, only rough always—very rough.'

Mildred turned full upon him.

'One day Sholto Alexander will be in a position to look down upon you!'

The honest indignation that was in her tone, the contempt for Eugene and his ways, which flashed in her eyes, caused that young gentleman to feel not a little disconcerted. He coloured, shifted himself about, elevated his eyebrows, and, by various signs, made it manifest that the shot had gone home. But Eugene was a rising pupil in the school of polite affectation. He managed to hide his vexation quickly.

'You may be right,' he said, with a clever little laugh. 'The tables do turn in that way sometimes.'

Seeing that Mildred did not speak again, and fearful lest he might have gone too far, Eugene added smoothly,

'No one will be better pleased at such an event than I. Poor old Sholto! we have been friends since we were small boys.'

Still Mildred did not speak.

'And I am glad to find,' Eugene continued, gaining courage, 'that he has such a champion.'

This was not inartistically said with a touch of raillery, but a kind of deference to Mildred running through it. Eugene felt pretty sure that she would not answer him with any roughness, and he was right.

'I am not Sholto's champion,' she said coldly. 'I do not care what becomes of him, except for his mother's sake.'

'Milly!' Violet called out reproachfully. 'I do!'

'Another champion!' exclaimed Eugene, turning upon Violet with a bow. He was encouraged by his previous success. 'Sholto is fortunate.'

'Violet is always the friend of unhappy people,' Mildred said, taking her sister's hand, and speaking as if she forgot Eugene's presence.

'And Milly,' cried Violet, with one of her musical laughs—'Milly is so afraid of being thought good that she pretends to care for nobody!'

The Golden Girls were goodly to see at that moment—the dark and fair, the sickly and the strong, each admiring the other.

'As for me,' said Eugene, with sprightliness, for he had recovered his spirits, 'I like to be my own champion. I avoid all unfortunate people. I like to be thought good. And as to caring for nobody, that is not true of me: I care for myself.'

But he said all this with such a lively air, and such an appearance of making fun, that no one could have known him for a selfish young man.

CHAPTER XXVI.

IN WHICH A GOOD ANGEL SENDS A MISSIVE TO SORROWFUL SHOLTO ALEXANDER, AND HE MAKES A GRAND GUESS.

A FEW nights later Sholto Alexander was lying on the sofa in his lodgings. This young fellow's heart was breaking. He had tried, with great energy and with perfect maintenance of his vows of amendment, to recover his position. But he was deeply in debt. That is, he owed in one place or another nearly five-and-twenty

pounds, which was, for him, a hopeless sum. He well knew that his mother's resources were exhausted; indeed, an honourable shame forbade his again applying to her for help. He had tried two of his frolicsome companions, but they had declined to help him—one from stinginess, the other because he too was impoverished. In this desperate state of affairs Sholto, mad with remorse and hopeless of the future, had resolved to enlist. He had written a letter to his mother, telling her of his resolution, which—the letter said—would be put in effect before that intimation could reach her. He had sold his few remaining books and his watch to pay his lodging-bill, and now everything was done, and he was going forth to take the Queen's shilling and bid good-bye to all his hopes in life. Sholto, like many a hero (and many a criminal too), was soft-hearted, and, with sobs and tears, he lay upon his bed; but his determination was fixed; he was resolved no longer to be a burden and a disgrace to the mother whom, amidst all his follies, he tenderly loved. There was a depth of misery in the young fellow's heart. He was bidding adieu to his profession and, probably, to his country; and not to these only, but also to a secret hope which he had long nursed in his heart, and which, wild though it might be, was dearer to him than all the world beside.

At this crisis Fortune waved her wand. Sholto was rising to depart, when there came a knock at his door, and his landlady bustled in with a registered letter.

She was evidently surprised at such a communication to the unfortunate, and he, full of vague fear and wonder, would scarcely wait until she left the room to open the mysterious enclosure.

Something carefully wrapped up in blank sheets of paper! His heart beat. A bank-note! Two—three bank-notes! So many bank-notes that he must count them carefully! And then, calmed by his very surprise and excitement, Sholto slowly numbered up ten ten-pound notes, white and crisp and new. On the inner wrapping-sheet were two lines of writing—*Finish your studies. Never again do anything you will be ashamed of.*

How did men of old behave when ministering angels appeared to them in moments of trouble? Sholto Alexander could not at first believe his eyes or his other senses. Then followed a space of wonder—Who could this friend be? Then a moment of rebellious pride at the idea of accepting bounty. Then he read the lines again, and their simplicity went to his heart. The tide turned. He was saved. Next moment he was lying on his bed again, sobbing, but not as he sobbed three minutes before. Hope, joy, good resolutions, fortified by fortune, once more occupied his mind.

At last a sudden thought struck him. He guessed who his benefactor was.

'Eugene!' he cried, springing up and clasping his hands, 'O Eugene, how much I wronged you! you who pretended to neglect me, only that you might befriend me secretly and without praise!'

(To be continued.)

A TALE OF AN APRIL DAY.

'I HAVE something to tell you, sweet Madge,' I said,
As we sat by the fire together,
While the firelight red kissed the gold on her head,
And 'outside it was bitter cold weather.
I hoped that the warmth would melt her heart,
But, alas! with a shrug of dismay,
'O, not in the cold must your story be told!'
She exclaimed in her petulant way.
Love told in winter,
When the world is white,
Melts like the snowflakes,
Vanishes from sight.

When the dancing and music were gay and bright,
And we moved to the same sweet strain,
And my lips were so near to her little pink ear,
I murmured my secret again;
But she stopped me with sudden impatience,
And said she'd not dance any more;
So again did she quell the tale I would tell,
As she always had done before.
Love told in ballrooms—
Maidens wise, beware!—
Lasts but for the evening,
Dies in daylight's glare.

When the moonlight lay on the shining land,
And the music of stillness was heard,
And the glistening eyes of the stars in the skies
All bade me to speak the word,
'O, not by the light of the pitiless moon
Will I listen to you,' she said;
'Moonbeams are like hosts of gliding pale ghosts,
And all things look dreary and dead.'
Love told by moonlight
Has no power to move:
Cold and chill is moonlight,
Warm and sweet is love.

When the fruit was hanging purple and ripe,
And each flower was flaming bright,
And the golden sheaves and the gold-green leaves
Were all bathed in the burning light,

Then I said, 'My love, O, listen to me !'
But she answered, and smiled at the sky,
'The birds, dogs, and bees, and even the breeze,
Are dozing, and why may not I ?'
Tell not love at noontide,
'Tis too grave a thing ;
Flowers and gnats are basking,
Birds too hot to sing.

'Maid Madge, maid Madge, though I love you so well,
I'll be put off no longer, I swear ;
My patience is great, but you've tried it of late,
And next time I will force you to hear.'
Where the clear green waves are lapping
Upon the yellow sand,
And the fresh salt wind is blowing
Towards the sunny land ;
When the tender clouds are flying
Across the April sky,
And the living breezes singing
Their pleasant melody ;
In the early, early morning,
When the glad young day looks sweet,
And the clear air washed with dewdrops,
Then I heard her little feet.
She came and stood beside me ;
And in the morning glory
I looked into her fairer eyes,
And told sweet Madge my story.

M. T.

THE FLYING HIGHWAYMAN.

RATHER more than eighty years ago, the public, and especially the travelling public, was thrown into a great state of excitement over the daring robberies of one Captain Hawkes, generally known, from the marvellous rapidity of his movements, as 'The Flying Highwayman.' Such splendid cattle did this bold knight of the road possess, that he was able to cover immense distances in extraordinarily short spaces of time, and would often be heard of in the evening at some spot sixty miles or more from where he had been seen in the morning. But Justice, though slow, is sure, and at last she laid her hand even on the slippery Captain Hawkes. The story of his capture is a good illustration of the cleverness of the old Bow-street runners. I shall, therefore, proceed to tell it in the orthodox style of the romancer.

In the forenoon of an autumn day in the year 1797, a post chaise drew up at the Plough Inn, Salt Hill, the last stage before entering London by the Great Western-road, and there alighted a big burly man, who, carrying a brace of horse-pistols in his hand, stalked noisily into the bar-parlour, and called for some hot brandy-and-water. When the landlord entered, the traveller asked, in a loud voice, 'Well, any news of the Flying Highwayman, that all you people are so terribly frightened of? Ha, ha! a parcel o' rubbish! I'd like to see any highwayman attack *me*. D'ye see these barkers, Mr. Landlord?' holding out the pistols; 'with

these by my side, I'll defy any two highwaymen in England to rob me.'

The only other person in the parlour was a tall angular-looking individual, whose drab coat and gaiters and broad-brimmed hat proclaimed him a Quaker. This man of peace was quietly partaking of some cold beef, with occasional pulls at a tankard of ale by his side, and seemed much disconcerted by the reckless way in which the boisterous traveller brandished his weapons. However, Quaker-like, he said nothing, but went on with his meal in silence. Presently, as the noisy traveller was settling with the landlord at the bar, the Quaker brushed past him, and went outside. Five minutes later the blustering gentleman drove off in his chaise, with a pistol in each hand ready for action, for a bleak and lonely heath which had an evil name for highway robberies lay straight before him. The chaise rattled on fast, the driver being as anxious as his fare to get quickly over this desolate bit of road. Presently the quick ears of the passenger detected the thud of hoofs on the turf, and a stern voice cried to the postillion, 'Stop, or I'll fire!' The next instant a horseman, masked in black crape, came to the window, and, presenting a pistol at the occupant of the chaise, bade him hand over all his valuables at once. The traveller raised his arm and fired point-blank at the robber, but his pistol flashed in the pan. Quick as thought he pulled the trigger of his second pistol,

but with the same mortifying result.

'No good, friend Bounce, trying that game,' said the highwayman coolly; 'the powder was carefully blown out of each of thy pans, almost under thy nose, at the inn. If thou dost not want a bullet through thy head, just hand me over the repeater in thy boot, the purse in thy hat, the bank-notes in thy fob, the gold snuff-box in thy breast, and the diamond ring up thy sleeve. Out with 'em in less time than thee took when I saw thee put 'em there, or I'll send thee to Davy Jones and take 'em myself.'

Thus adjured by a man whose voice and appearance left no doubt that he was a person not to be trifled with, the blustering traveller, casting one glance at the barrel of the pistol levelled at his head, flung down his useless weapons, and, with a crestfallen air, pulled out his valuables and handed them over to the highwayman. As soon as the latter had mentally inventoried them he pocketed the lot, and, flinging half-a-crown into the chaise, said, dropping his affected Quakerism, 'There is enough to pay your turnpike. I strongly recommend you to proceed on your journey as fast as you can. And, hark 'ee, for the future don't brag quite so much.' He then turned his horse's head, and rode across the heath at a rapid pace, whilst the chaise proceeded along the high-road in a different direction.

The traveller's thoughts as he proceeded on his journey could not have been very pleasant, and his feelings towards Captain Hawkes must have been savagely vindictive. Little did he dream, however, that, even whilst he was invoking maledictions on the head of the highwayman, Nemesis was already on the track of the de-

spoiler, and Justice was waiting with open arms to receive her prey. The 'Flying Highwayman' never drew rein until he had placed a good twenty miles between himself and the scene of his latest exploit. At last he pulled up his panting horse at a roadside inn, the Rising Sun. It was then about four o'clock in the afternoon, and, finding there were no sounds suggestive of customers proceeding from the tavern, he called for the ostler, dismounted, and entered the plain and homely parlour. It was not, however, untenanted. A couple of ploughmen, in their smocks, were sitting with their heads resting on their arms, evidently fast asleep, after partaking too freely of the strong ale of the house. The new-comer, having ordered a glass of spirits and filled himself a long clay pipe, sat down to enjoy himself, and was soon lost in a reverie. Presently one of the yokels woke with a snort, raised his shaggy head, rubbed his hands across his eyes, and then seized upon the quart pot which stood on the table beside him. A glance into the mug showed that it was empty. Whereupon, with an oath, the ploughman turned round and gave his companion a dig in the ribs that nearly knocked him off the settle. 'Ye greedy chap!' he exclaimed; 'blowed if ye ain't been and drunk up all the beer while I were a-sleepin'!'

'Then ye shouldn't ha' been a-sleepin', ye fule!' retorted the other, with a derisive grin.

'I'll gie ye a dowse o' the chaps, if ye grin at me!' cried the other angrily.

'Haw, haw! tha' knowst better than to strike me; for tha' knowst I'd gie thee a hidin' as soon as look at thee.'

'Theer, then, take that!' said

the other in a rage, and gave his pal a back-hander across the face as he spoke. In another instant both were on their feet, scuffling and wrestling and punching round-armed at one another, after the fashion of rustics. Then they closed and rolled over on the floor. The stranger watched them with an amused glance, as he tranquilly smoked his pipe and sipped his grog. It was not worth his while interfering in a stupid drunken quarrel. But suddenly his face grew serious. He dropped his pipe, sprang from his seat, and the next moment had one of the yokels by the wrist. One twist of his powerful hand, and there fell from the fellow's hand a clasp-knife, with which, in another second, he would have stabbed his antagonist.

'No, no; fair play, no knives,' said the stranger, as he stooped down and picked up the knife. In the twinkling of an eye he was himself on his back on the floor, with both the ruffians on top of him. In vain he struggled; they clung to him like leeches, till a sharp click and snap was heard; then the two rustics rose to their feet, leaving the stranger on the ground, with his hands securely *handcuffed!*

'Ha, ha!' said the one who had drawn the knife; 'neatly managed, warn't it?' and as he spoke he threw off his smock and his caroty wig, and disclosed the red waistcoat and shrewd features of a Bow-street runner.

'Nailed at last, captain,' said the other to the highwayman, as he scowled at them from the floor. 'Thought we should have ye before long, but didn't expect to get ye so easy.'

Yes; Captain Hawkes, the famous 'Flying Highwayman,' was nabbed at last, and no mistake. He bore his misfortunes with stoic

composure, though he must have known that the game was up, and that nothing short of a miracle could now save him from the gallows. That night he was lodged in Newgate; and when the news of his capture was spread through London the next morning, the excitement among all classes was intense. At the clubs and coffee-houses, in drawing-rooms and inn-parlours, there was nothing else talked of but the clever capture of the 'Flying Highwayman,' and the applications for seats at the Old Bailey to witness his trial were unprecedented. Among those who visited the captain in Newgate was the notorious Colonel George Hanger, afterwards Lord Coleraine, who had known Hawkes as a betting-man at Newmarket and Epsom. The colonel had heard wonderful stories of a certain famous mare of the 'Flying Highwayman's,' and was anxious to purchase her. But I will allow the gallant colonel to tell the story of the interview in his own words.

'I went to Newgate,' he says, in that exceedingly rare book, his 'Autobiography,' and desired to see Mr. Hawkes, without telling the turnkey who I was. The turnkey called him out to the taproom, and I heard him tell his prisoner that an acquaintance wanted to speak to him. After calling for a bottle of wine and condoling with him on his situation, I entered on my business with him, telling him I knew he had a famous mare, and that I wished much to buy her. "The mare," says he, "is a good mare still, though she has done a great deal of work; and, moreover, is as fast a one as ever I crossed." "Pray, Mr. Hawkes, what is the greatest distance, in point of expedition, you ever rode her?" "Why, sir, the longest ground, in

a short time, that she ever carried me was one evening, when, after *doing a little business* near Salt Hill, I rode her within the hour to London." "She must be very speedy indeed," I replied; and no more was said about the mare's performances. I then made him a present of two or three guineas, and told him that, as the mare was to be sold for the benefit of the captors, I hoped he would not deceive me, but tell me frankly whether he would recommend me to buy her or not. "Sir," answered he, "it is not likely that a man so near his latter end as I am (for there is hardly any chance of my escaping) should deceive any one; therefore, sir, pray tell me for what purpose do you want her?" I replied, "For the road, and *only* for the road." "Then, sir, I tell you frankly that I recommend you not to purchase her, for I do not think she will suit you, as it was *with the greatest difficulty I could ever get her up to a carriage.*"

Clearly, the colonel and the captain placed different meanings on the word 'road;' but I think Mr. Hawkes must have been slightly drawing the long-bow when he stated that he had ridden the mare from Salt Hill to London within the hour; for the distance is, unless I am mistaken, little, if at all, under four-and-twenty miles.

Colonel Hanger, whether he purchased the mare or not, took a deep interest in the imprisoned highwayman, and has preserved many stories of his humanity and charity. The gallant captain, it appears, lived for some years near Uxbridge, where no one suspected him of being a highwayman; but he was generally regarded as an elegant, accomplished, and particularly charitable gentleman. Amongst other stories to

his credit are the following. As he was riding out near Uxbridge one day, well dressed and well mounted, he met a poor labourer, who stopped him, and said, 'Good gentleman, don't ride that way, for there are two footpads gone up that lane, who have just robbed me.' 'What have you lost?' said Hawkes. 'Ten or twelve shillings,' replied the man, 'all I have earned by hard labour to support a wife and family during the week.' 'Take this pistol, then, in your hand,' said Hawkes, 'and get up behind me, and show me the men who robbed you.' The countryman accordingly sprang up behind him, and they soon overtook the footpads. Dismounting, Hawkes, after asking them if they were not ashamed to rob a poor labourer, knocked one down, whilst the countryman seized the other. The bold highwayman then took everything from them, beat them soundly, gave the spoils to his humble companion, mounted his horse, and telling the grateful but astonished yokel to remember the 'Flying Highwayman,' galloped out of sight.

On another occasion this chivalrous thief listened to the plea of a poor naval lieutenant, who was a passenger in the coach which Hawkes had stopped, and said magnanimously, 'Then get out of the coach, sir; I don't want to take a small pittance from a poor officer, who has earned it hardly in his country's service.'

But these things availed little with a jury, and the bold captain was condemned to die. Colonel Hanger saw him frequently before his execution, and did his best to procure his escape. Hawkes thought the turnkey might be bribed, and the colonel at once placed a hundred-pound note in the prisoner's hands to effect that

object. 'A few days afterwards,' says the colonel, 'sitting at breakfast, my servant told me that a woman wanted to speak to me. I ordered her to be shown up; and who should this be but the wife of Hawkes, who came with her husband's best gratitude and respects to me, and returned me the hundred-pound note, informing me that he had tried every means to no purpose, and that die he must'

And die he did—game too, as he had lived. In those days there was no drop or scaffold; but the culprit was driven under the

gallows in a cart, the noose was adjusted by the hangman, and then the cart drove on, leaving the unhappy wretch suspended in mid-air. But Hawkes did not wait for the driving on of the cart; he sprang out of it to meet his death, and was the sooner launched into eternity. Colonel Hanger was there and saw it all; but I will spare the reader that eccentric gentleman's moralisings on the scene, for they are not particularly edifying. Suffice it to say that such was the end of the 'Flying Highwayman.'

THREE WIZARDS AND A WITCH.

BY MRS. J. H. RIDDELL, AUTHOR OF 'THE SENIOR PARTNER,'
'GEORGE GEITH OF FEN COURT,' ETC.

CHAPTER X.

MR. SUDLOW IS ADVISED FOR HIS
GOOD.

LIGHTS and Mr. Sudlow appeared together—the former in tall silver candlesticks, massive, and of an antique pattern; the latter in all the splendour of evening dress. As they shook hands Mr. Gayre surveyed his visitor.

'Going to some scene of gay festivity?' he inquired.

Mr. Sudlow coloured a little.

'No, nowhere very particular,' he answered. 'I—I just looked in on—on my way. I thought you would not mind. I have called so often lately and always found you out.'

'Yes, it has been unfortunate,' remarked the banker; but he did not proceed to indulge in expressions of regret, or tender any explanation of—or apology for—his absence. He only asked Mr. Sudlow if he would take some coffee, and while he sipped his own stood leaning against the mantelpiece, looking thoughtfully down on the flowers that filled the wide hearth.

For a few moments the younger man did not speak; then he said, as if in a sort of desperation,

'Mr. Gayre, *when* are you going to introduce me to your brother-in-law?'

Mr. Gayre, thus directly appealed to, laughed, took another lump of sugar and stirred his coffee, before he answered,

'I am sure I cannot tell; fact

is, the more I see of the worthy Baronet the less I consider his acquaintance a blessing to be desired.'

'But you promised me,' expostulated Mr. Sudlow; 'you did—you know you did!'

'Did I? Well, perhaps so; only circumstances alter cases, and with the fresh understanding I have recently gained of Sir Geoffrey's character, I should certainly advise any one able to keep him at arm's length to do so.'

'But it is not Sir Geoffrey I want to know—it is his daughter.'

'My dear fellow, don't excite yourself; of course, I understand it is the daughter. But you can't make her acquaintance without at the same time making that of the father, and, as a friend, I say have nothing whatever to do with Sir Geoffrey Chelston. You think you can take care of yourself, I know,' went on Mr. Gayre; 'that the owner of Meridian-square will be more than a match for the Baronet, without an acre of land or a house of his own. On your own head, then, be it. You shall become acquainted with a gentleman who, to quote those words of Mr. Pickwick which so deceived the widow Bardell, will teach you more tricks in a week than you would ever learn in a year.'

'And when?' asked Mr. Sudlow suggestively.

'Only to consider the impatience of youth!' exclaimed Mr. Gayre. 'Perhaps you imagined I would take you to call this minute,' he added, with cruel

irony; 'but I won't hurry you along the road to destruction. One of these afternoons we will search out Sir Geoffrey, about the time he arises from slumber and before he goes forth to seek whom he may devour. But one word of caution, Sudlow,' went on Mr. Gayre, with a short bitter laugh; 'don't let him choose you a horse.'

'You may be very sure I won't,' returned Mr. Sudlow, with energy.

'I am aware you think you play billiards pretty well—still, were I in your place, I would not pit my skill against the Baronet's. Further, do not lend him any money; do not let him persuade you to put your name to paper; be very wary of all games both of chance and skill; refrain from laying or taking odds—'

'Anything else?' asked Mr. Sudlow a little sulkily.

'Well, no, except that you would do well to have nothing whatever to do with Sir Geoffrey Chelston.'

'You must permit me to be the best judge of that.'

'All right, so you shall; only I should be very sorry to see Meridian-square, and all the other elegant and convenient, if less profitable, properties you possess, converted into ducks and drakes; and that is a conjuring trick the Baronet will perform with incredible rapidity unless you are very careful.'

'I believe he has bit you,' said Mr. Sudlow, with a certain triumph.

'You are mistaken in that belief,' answered Mr. Gayre, the coldness which had characterised his manner during the interview deepening into displeasure. 'In which direction are you going, Sudlow? I will walk part of the way with you. I want a stroll and a cigar.'

In some places and with some people Mr. Sudlow was often bold, not to say arrogant; but the banker exercised a deterrent influence over him, which he felt perhaps rather than understood.

With almost any other man he might have prolonged the conversation, and indulged in further argument; but since his youth he had looked up to and feared Mr. Gayre. Habit accordingly proved stronger than indiscretion, and muttering something about the Strand, and looking in at one of the theatres, he took the hint so plainly given, and rose to go.

They passed together into the quiet street, and under the peaceful stars sauntered slowly along, speaking no word for some little time, each busy with his own thoughts, whatever those thoughts might be.

It was Mr. Sudlow who broke the silence, and his first remark proved he had been thinking how to give Mr. Gayre a rap over the knuckles.

'I was surprised to meet Miss Chelston the other day.'

'In the Park?'

'No, I have not seen her *there* for a long time. At Baker-street Station.'

'Romantic,' commented Mr. Gayre, who, had he spoken frankly, would have said he *felt* a great deal more surprised than Mr. Sudlow.

'A railway-station is as good a place to meet a lady as any other in these days,' retorted the younger man.

'It may be, you ought to know.'

'She was going to Kew.'

'You mean my niece, I suppose?'

'Yes; and we travelled down in the same compartment.'

'Indeed!'

'She went to one of the old houses on the Green.'

'Once more referring to Miss Chelston'

'Of course; I did not know it was necessary to go on repeating a woman's name in conversation, like "my lord" in an official letter.'

'O!' and Mr. Gayre walked on, smoking steadily, and refused utterly to ask a single question, though Mr. Sudlow waited and longed for him to do so.

'True love will excuse many things,' began the banker at last; 'still, as neither Sir Geoffrey nor his daughter is aware you fell in love with my niece the first day you saw her riding remarkably badly in the Park, I really do not think I should ever mention that you followed Miss Chelston in the manner you seem to have done. The Baronet might think you had been—spying.'

'How do you know I was not going to the Green too, on my own business?'

'I do not know, of course; I only suppose. And under any circumstances I should not advise you to mention the matter—I really should not.'

'I only mentioned it now to show you—'

'To show me what?' asked Mr. Gayre, as the other paused and hesitated; 'to show you could form my niece's acquaintance without my help. Make no mistake on that point, my friend—you might get to know a milliner's apprentice by travelling in the same compartment with her to Kew on Whit-Monday, but not that of a girl in a higher rank of life.'

'You are always so hard upon me,' complained Mr. Sudlow. 'You always take a wrong construction out of what I say.'

'Then learn to express yourself in such a way that misconception is impossible,' returned Mr. Gayre sternly. 'At all events,

understand clearly that though Sir Geoffrey Chelston is an unprincipled *roué*, his daughter has never caught even a glimpse of Bohemia, and I mean to take very good care she never does. Fortunately she has not the slightest inclination in that direction; I believe a girl never lived more capable of understanding and resenting the impertinence of modern puppyhood than my niece.'

'Do you suppose I was going to offer her any impertinence?'

'How can I tell? all I know is you had better not.'

'Mr. Gayre, on my honour—'

'Your honour! Well, well, let that pass; proceed.'

'I wish you would not so constantly catch me up—you make me forget what I intended to say.'

'That is a pity, for you were, if I mistake not, about to remark you admired the calm dignity of Miss Chelston's manners, when answering the observations made to her by a gentleman "who travelled in the same compartment all the way to Kew," as much as her beauty. Come, Sudlow, confess my niece snubbed you effectually.'

'She did not do anything of the sort.'

'Do you expect me to believe she talked to you?'

'No, no! O, no! She did not talk, but she was quite polite. Said "no," and "yes," and "thank you," and that.'

'Evidently regarding you as an outer barbarian all the time,' suggested Mr. Gayre, with relish. 'Yes, I know her style. Frankly,' he added, 'for your sake I am very sorry this has happened; why can't or won't you remember all girls are not barmaids, and that the fascinating manner and brilliant conversation which prove so

effective across a marble-topped counter are really worse than useless with young ladies who have been discreetly brought up?

'You are always preaching to me,' observed Mr. Sudlow.

'And with so little result. I think I shall leave off preaching altogether.'

'You are offended, and I declare nothing in the world was further from my intention than to annoy you.'

'We had better let the subject drop.'

'But you will introduce me to your niece?'

'I shall have to reconsider that matter. Second thoughts are often best.'

'But, Mr. Gayre, indeed, I meant no harm. Pray do not speak to me in that tone. You know I would not voluntarily vex you for the world.'

Mr. Gayre burst out laughing. It was the best thing possible for him to do under the circumstances.

'Three quarrels in one day!' he exclaimed. 'It would be wise, I think, to get me home and send for a doctor. Nevertheless, Sudlow, it was truth that I told just now. You must mind your *p*'s and *q*'s when I introduce you to Sir Geoffrey Chelston.'

'I'll take good heed to every letter in the alphabet, if that is all,' exclaimed Mr. Sudlow, relieved. Yet as he walked away, after parting from Mr. Gayre, who seemed disposed to carry out the programme he had indicated, so far as hieing him back to Wimpole-street was concerned, he muttered under his breath, 'O, if I only once could get the chance of giving you change in your own coin, I'd make your ears tingle! I wonder what has come to you lately? You always were given to gibing, but since

the Baronet appeared on the scene you have grown unbearable.'

Once rid of his companion, Mr. Gayre only retraced the way for a short distance towards Wimpole-street. Instead he turned in the direction of Manchester-square, and walking evidently for the sake of walking, and not because he desired to reach any definite goal, occupied himself in reflections upon the occurrences of the afternoon, devoting a considerable amount of attention to that statement of Mr. Sudlow's concerning Miss Margaret's visit to Kew.

'I wonder who it is she knows at Kew?' he thought. 'Shall I try to get her married? or, following the Canon's sensible advice, settle a small annuity on her and wash my hands of the whole business? Heavens! what dirty water I always seem to be dabbling in now! There was a time when I would not have soiled the tip of my finger with it. Alas! and alas! Nicholas Gayre, Love has, I fear, played you a scurvy trick once more. You had better don cap and bells at once, for you are a far greater fool than Sudlow, and all for the sake of a woman concerning whom you know next to nothing. I wonder if she will be able to sweeten this Marah—extract any healing out of such a Bethesda?'

For, indeed, when Mr. Gayre exhausted the subject (and his mind was so constituted he could not help exhausting any subject which concerned himself, whether agreeable or the reverse) he found he had since that memorable day in May, when the horse Mr. Arbery was riding shied at a steam-roller, been travelling across a wilderness, in which the few springs were very bitter and the pools brackish, and playing an extremely risky game. What he

said was quite true. There had been a time when he would not have meddled in Sir Geoffrey's concerns for any consideration. You cannot touch pitch and not be defiled was a truth the Gayres never cared to forget, and Nicholas Gayre could not disguise from himself the fact that his brother-in-law could in no moral sense be regarded as clean. The more he saw of him the more hopelessly disreputable did the man appear. Washing an Ethiop white would have been a possible task in comparison with taking even a part of the stain out of the Baronet's nature.

In the days gone by, when Sir Geoffrey kept his account in Lombard-street, on the first occasion of his drawing below the large amount which Gayres expected to be kept as a balance, a letter was despatched to Chelston Pleasaunce, directing his attention to the fact, and begging that the mistake might be rectified; but, finding the same 'mistake' repeated, Mr. Gayre requested that the account might be closed.

This was the beginning of a coolness which lasted up to the time when Mr. Nicholas Gayre sought out his relative in North Bank—a coolness which Sir Geoffrey's own conduct intensified into total estrangement. The banker thought of all this as he walked along the London streets under the quiet stars, and a feeling not unlike shame oppressed him as he considered how utterly at variance his own conduct had of late been with the traditions of his house.

'And all because of a woman's face,' he decided. 'Well, I can't draw back now. I went into the Chelston pest-house with my eyes open, and whatever happens I have only myself to thank. Sir Geoffrey is not any better than I

expected to find him; and my niece is not much worse than I expected to find her. She is false; but she is not fast, thank Heaven. I wonder who it is she knows at Kew? She ought not to be running about London by herself; but I do not see that I can interfere in the matter.' And having, just as he reached his own door, arrived at this sensible conclusion, Mr. Gayre put his key in the lock, and passed into the library, where he saw a letter lying on the table.

'It is from Sir Geoffrey, Colonel,' said his servant; 'a messenger brought it up from the club. He did not know whether any answer was required; so I told him you were out, and that I had no idea when you would be back, but if a reply was expected I could take it myself.'

Mr. Gayre made no comment. He only lifted the note with the usual dread and repugnance with which he always approached the Baronet's communications, and, tearing open the envelope, read:

'Dear Gayre,—Peggy is certainly turning over a new leaf. What do you think she proposed this evening? Why, that we should both run down to Enfield early to-morrow and look up Susan. I can't tell you how pleased I am. I have promised to be a good boy and get home betimes to-night, so as to be in condition for the journey.—Yours, G. C.'

'Now what is the English of this move?' marvelled Mr. Gayre. But he need not have exercised his mind over this question. For once Miss Chelston was playing a perfectly straightforward game. 'Circumstances alter cases,' and she felt as anxious for Miss Drummond's company as she had once been desirous of avoiding it.

CHAPTER XI.

'SHOULD AULD ACQUAINTANCE BE FORGOT?'

PEACE reigned in Mr. Moreby's villa. The summer glory lay golden without, sunshine dwelt within. Susan had come, and the house seemed transformed. The rooms were the same, the furniture was the same, and yet everything looked different; the place had that charm of home it never possessed before. Susan was there—with her bright cheerful face, her pleasant laugh, her useful hands, her constant thoughtfulness, her unselfish heart, her tireless consideration for others. Mistaken! No, Mr. Gayre understood here at last was a woman sound to the core; a woman a man would be safe in loving, and who herself could love till the last hour of her life. Already he felt as if he had known her for years—as if there had never been a time when he and Susan Drummond were total strangers.

They sat at tea in the charming room looking out on the lawn; sun-blinds excluded the glare of light and heat, the windows were filled with flowers. Sir Geoffrey lay almost at full length in an easy-chair; his daughter was looking her best, and trying to seem demurely unconscious of Mr. Sudlow's admiring glances.

Miss Drummond presided over the tea equipage, and Mr. Gayre was taking her part against the apparently good-natured accusations of extravagance which Miss Chelston was bringing against her.

But Susan needed no champion, she was perfectly well able to defend herself.

'If one is to have tea at all one may as well have it good, and I am very sure the extra cost cannot be a shilling a week. I excessively dislike tea that has been "brewed."

'So do I, Susan,' exclaimed Sir Geoffrey, who had been coaxed into accepting a cup of the refreshing beverage, and was considering how to escape drinking it. 'I'd just as soon take a dose of senna.'

'Your tea is certainly extremely nice, Miss Drummond,' capped Mr. Gayre.

'We are all teetotallers at Enfield, you see,' went on Susan, in calm explanation—'my cousin from choice, my aunt on principle, and I and the servants from necessity.'

'O Susan, how can you say such things!' expostulated Miss Chelston, shocked.

'Have I said something very dreadful?' asked Miss Drummond of the company generally.

'No, faith,' cried Sir Geoffrey; 'after the wine your uncle used to have at the Hall you must find water an awful cross to bear.'

'Happily the water is very good at Enfield. But what I meant to say was, that as we have no other extravagance we surely are justified in making good tea.'

'You shall make it as you like here, Susan. That lazy little minx always leaves it to the servants, and nice stuff they turn out;' and the Baronet set down his cup and took a little stroll to the window, and peeped under the sun-blind and remarked he thought a breath of air was stirring, and then asked Susan when they were to have a long ride together. 'I'll find you a mount,' he added.

'I think there is one of my horses Miss Drummond would like,' remarked Mr. Gayre.

'O, you don't want to ride, do you, dear?' suggested Miss Chelston softly.

'Yes, I do, very much indeed. But I must first get a habit; I won't bring eternal disgrace upon you, Maggie, by wearing that old

thing I had on when we met in the Park.'

'It was a horror,' said Miss Chelston.

'Ah, well, it won't offend your eyes again. I mean to have one of the latest fashion, short and narrow, so that if I am thrown I sha'n't have a chance of helping myself.'

'Order it from my tailor, Susan,' advised Sir Geoffrey; 'he never expects to be paid under six years.'

'You had better have it from mine, Miss Drummond,' said Mr. Sudlow; 'he is a very good man, and allows fifteen per cent for cash with order.'

'What a pull you rich fellows have over us poor devils!' groaned Sir Geoffrey; 'we are forced to pay through the nose for everything.'

'Thank you, Mr. Sudlow, for your suggestion,' answered Susan; 'but I am having the habit "built," as my cousin phrases it, by the "local practitioner."'

'Good gracious, Susan, you might just as well put your money in the fire!' said Miss Chelston.

'Wait till you see this great work of art,' advised Susan. 'I ventured to pay the old man a compliment about the fit, which he received with lofty indifference, merely saying, "Yes, I think we are pretty good sculptors!"'

Mr. Gayre laughed, Miss Chelston looked disgusted, and Sir Geoffrey declared, 'By Jove, that wasn't bad!'

'What is the colour of the thing?' asked Miss Chelston.

'The colour of the uniform of the Irish Constabulary,' said Miss Drummond, 'invisible green. I am not going to enter into competition with you, though I do think that precise shade of blue in your habit divine.'

'And so becoming,' added Mr. Sudlow, as a general sort of state-

ment, which he made particular by a look at Miss Chelston.

'And so becoming, as you truly remark,' observed Miss Drummond, laughing, '*to some persons.*'

At this juncture Sir Geoffrey bethought him that the room was unbearably hot, and that he would take a turn round the garden to 'stretch his legs a bit.'

It was some time before he appeared sauntering over the lawn, for it had been necessary for him to pause in the dining-room and refresh exhausted nature from a convenient decanter.

Shortly Mr. Gayre joined him among the flowers, and then learned his brother-in-law was deucedly sorry, but he had an appointment he could not possibly miss.

'Don't let me drive you away, Gayre, though,' he said. 'Make yourself as much at home here as you can; and look here, you bring your friend up some evening to dinner. The girls make luncheon dinner when I am out; but name your day, and I daresay we can manage something fit to eat. Susan and Mrs. Lavender shall go into committee.'

'Are you going to instal Miss Drummond as housekeeper?' asked Mr. Gayre.

'Bless you, she has installed herself. Peggy will do nothing but dress. There never was such a girl for finery. She'll have to marry somebody rich, for she'd very soon bring a poor man to the workhouse. Has it struck you that Sudlow's mightily taken with her?'

'He seems to admire her very much.'

'Well, then, clearly understand, if he means business I won't stand in the way. Anybody with half an eye can see there's not a bit of breed about him; but you say he's well off, and nobody without money need think of Peggy. It

would be a great relief to me to have her well settled; so now you know my views, and, as far as I am concerned, your friend can propose as soon as he likes.'

'But, good Heavens, he was only introduced to her the other day!'

'I know that; but "happy's the wooing that's not long of doing;" and between you and me, the sooner we can get her off our hands the better. A great deal of running could be done in a short time; and the days slip away when you are living in a borrowed house and have to trust to your wits for money. I thought I would just give you a hint of what is in my mind.'

'Most kind of you, I'm sure.'

'Well, my idea is a man can't be too straightforward, and I may tell you the sooner Peggy is married the better I shall be pleased.'

'Surely you don't want, though, to throw her at the head of the first person who seems to admire her? Don't be in such a hurry; give the girl a chance. She may meet plenty of men more desirable in every way than Mr. Sudlow.'

'She may,' agreed Sir Geoffrey, 'and also she may not; besides, Gayre, a "bird in the hand," you remember; and don't you make any mistake about sentiment, and all that sort of thing, as regards Peggy. She is as cold as a stone. She cares for nothing on earth but herself. If she had been different she might have done well for both of us.'

'Then you *had* some plan in your head when you brought her to London,' thought Mr. Gayre, 'which she has baulked.'

'And she's not a bit clever,' pursued Sir Geoffrey, anxious, apparently, thoroughly to convince Mr. Gayre of the desirability of closing with the first eligible offer. 'She's pretty, and she knows how to dress herself.'

'Two very good points about a woman,' commented Mr. Gayre.

'Well, well, I only tell you for your guidance.'

'But, Sir Geoffrey, she *is* not my daughter; if you want to get her married you had better *set* to work for yourself, had you *not*?'

'I! What can I do, a poor fellow out at elbows with Fortune, who has had the devil's own luck in life? Besides, it is not from my side of the house she gets her selfishness and want of brains. If I had thought more of myself and less of other people I should *not* have been placed as I am. I have been too considerate, too honest, Gayre—that is about the state of the case. Ah, if I *had* to begin life over again, I would act very differently!'

'I wouldn't vex myself about your own perfections, were I you.'

'No; it's of no use crying over spilt milk. But, to come back to what we were saying, you keep that matter in mind, and remember if your friend likes to propose I shall make no objection. Some men would want to know a lot about family and all the rest of it, but, thank Heaven, I have no prejudices. Everybody must have a beginning, and all I shall require to be satisfied about is, can he pay her milliner's bills, and keep her as a girl with such a face ought to be kept? Ah, talk of the—here she comes! Well, Peggy, how are you going to amuse your uncle? for I must be off. I am so sorry, Mr. Sudlow—confoundedly sorry; but Gayre has promised to bring you up to dinner some day very soon. You'll come, quite in a friendly way, won't you? We are very plain people, but sincere. I never ask any man to the house I don't want to see.'

In which statement there was

so much truth Mr. Gayre felt that even mentally he could not controvert it, while Mr. Sudlow, almost trembling with pleasure, said he would be only too delighted to accept the invitation.

'That's all right, then,' said the Baronet heartily. 'Now I really can't stop another minute. You'll excuse me, I am sure, Mr. Sudlow. Till our next merry meeting, Gayre. Farewell, Peggy. You'll see the last of me, I know, Susan,' and he turned back a pleased face to his brother-in-law as Miss Drummond slipped her hand through his arm and went with him into the house.

Something in that action seemed to touch Mr. Gayre to the heart. He had heard ere then of guardian angels, but never previously did it fall to his lot to see a pure and lovely woman taking charge of such a sinner as Sir Geoffrey Chelston.

'We also must be thinking about going,' he said; but Miss Chelston pleaded so prettily for a longer visit that the gentlemen consented to remain till nearer dinner-time, and finally it was arranged they should go out for a turn in Regent's Park.

'O, delightful!' exclaimed Susan, when the question was referred to her. 'I do think this part of the Park so exquisite.'

Half an hour later they were all strolling along together—Susan in a black silk dress, Margaret in a brown, which became her as well as the blue cloth habit had done. Regent's Park was looking its very best; the ornamental water shimmered and glittered under the beams of the evening sun. The leaves of the trees were fresh and cool, and free from dust; the birds were singing in the mimic plantations; there was a great peace in the hour and the scene, which seemed to lay a soothing

hand on the hearts of two, at all events, who looked wistfully at the landscape.

'It is very, very pretty,' said Susan to Mr. Gayre; and, looking in her face, he agreed with her; it was, indeed, very, very pretty.

'Are Kew Gardens well worth seeing?' asked Susan, after a minute's pause.

'Yes; I like the wild part best, however, where one gets away from the excursionists.'

'Maggie and I are going down to Kew to-morrow; perhaps we might be able to see the Gardens.'

'They are open every day,' said Mr. Gayre.

'It was not that I meant; we intended to visit two dear old ladies that we used to know at Chelston. They are the sisters-in-law of the former Rector. They used to live with and keep house for him. Such charming ladies! You can't think how lovely they were: the pink in their cheeks was so delicate, and their eyes so clear and blue; and they dressed so plainly yet so spotlessly, if you know what I mean; and the poor loved them so much, and with reason. Well, the Rector died. But I am afraid I tire you, Mr. Gayre.'

'Tire! Your story enchants me.'

'The Rector died, and then it seemed such a terrible thing for them to go into lodgings and live on their poor little income. I am sure I lay awake at nights crying about them; for they were such darlings. And then, in a minute, like something in a fairy-tale, a distant relation died, and left them a house on Kew Green for their lives. They took their lovely china and Indian curiosities up there. I helped them pack. And a niece, a widow, lives with them; and they put their incomes together; and it really is a delight-

ful ending to what might have been a sad tale. They have a nephew an artist. I think you heard Sir Geoffrey mention him.'

'Is he the son of the widow?' asked Mr. Gayre.

'No; his mother died long and long ago.'

'And is he still in Rome, or has he returned to England?'

'I have not heard anything about him for a long time. I shall know all to-morrow.'

'At last,' thought Mr. Gayre, 'I have met a woman in whom is no "shadow of turning." She is as transparent as glass. She is frankness and truth itself.' And he felt mightily relieved; for, after all, there seemed no wrong in his niece's trip to Kew.

'Save that she ought not to have gone alone. But there, if she never went out except with a chaperon, she might stop at home for the term of her natural life.'

Altogether it was an anomalous position. Mr. Gayre, when he considered the matter dispassionately, found it extremely difficult to define the rank to which his niece belonged.

'How fond, Miss Drummond,' he said, 'you seem to be of every thing and person connected with Chelston!'

'If you only could imagine,' she answered, 'how happy I was there, you would not wonder at my loving even the vagabond curs running about the roads.'

Chelston, she went on to tell him, was the loveliest place in all the wide world. Had he ever been there? Yes, once. Did he remember this, that, and the other about the Pleasaunce, the yew hedge, the fish-ponds, the cherry orchard, the great mulberry-tree, the vineries, the billiard-room, the library?

'At one time I used almost to live at the Pleasaunce,' she ex-

plained. 'Sir Geoffrey was good to me;' and then in a few words she told how, when but two years of age, her father died out in India, and her mother drooped and pined, and was buried in Chelston Churchyard six months afterwards.

'I never knew what it was, though, really to miss my parents,' she said. 'Everybody was so kind. I do not think any child could have been more petted and spoiled than I. My dear uncle would not even let me go to school to be taught, as poor old nurse used to say, to be like other young ladies; and I am very sure Maggie is right in saying I did not learn much from the governesses, who were supposed to teach useful knowledge. Dreadful, was it not?'

And Miss Drummond, remembering many pleasant speeches Miss Chelston had made to her in Mr. Gayre's presence, turned a mischievous laughing face to that gentleman, who, though he only smiled in answer, thought if his companion were to be regarded as an example of total ignorance, education might be dispensed with.

'I used to hear so much about you,' Susan went on, 'I feel as if I had known you all my life. And then—papa was an officer too.'

'I wish I were an officer now,' answered Mr. Gayre heartily, 'only that in such case I might not have had the pleasure of making your acquaintance. Should you like to go back to Chelston, Miss Drummond?'

'I think not,' she said, with a sad dreamy look in her wonderful eyes. 'You see we cannot take up the past again just as it was. It is like reading a book a second time, or hearing a song, or seeing a sunset. It is never the same

twice. My past was very beautiful, but it is ended. You can't put last year's leaves on the trees, and we—we can't stay children and girls for ever. Pretty nearly all the people I loved are dead or gone. No, I should not care for Chelston without my kind old uncle, and Sir Geoffrey, and all the other friends I was so fond of.' And for a moment Susan turned aside, while Mr. Gayre, who had his memories of loss, if not of love, walked on in silence too.

Just then, while Mr. Sudlow and his companion were gravely discoursing concerning the latest *on dit*—the Queen and Royal Family, the picture of the year, and the play which was considered most amusing, or the book attracting the greatest attention—Mr. Gayre saw a gentleman striding along the path, who, with eyes bent on the ground and hat pulled over his brow, passed beautiful Miss Chelston without a look, and would have served Miss Drummond in like manner had that young lady not arrested his attention with a cry.

'Lal!' she said, 'Lal!' and then they grasped hands, both hands.

'O, I am so glad!' she went on, 'I am so glad!'

'Where in all the wide world, Susan, did you spring from?' he asked, his face radiant with pleasure. 'It is like the good old long ago, meeting you again.'

'I am stopping with the Chelstons,' she answered. 'O Mr. Gayre, would you mind telling Margaret this is Mr. Hilderton? We were going to see your aunts to-morrow.'

Sweetly and decorously, without any undue haste or excitement, came back the fair Marguerite. *She* did not call the young gentleman 'Lal.' *She* did not greet him with effusion; she

only said, 'How very odd! we intended to go to Kew to-morrow.'

Susan's friendship, however, was of quite another kind. No cause to complain of the warmth of her greeting. She insisted on knowing 'where he was,' 'what he was doing,' 'how he was doing.' While Miss Chelston seemed to be considering how she could most gracefully efface herself, Miss Drummond asked fifty questions.

'I have a studio in Camden Town, Susan,' said the young man, 'and your face is in a picture there. Come and see it—do.'

'Certainly I will,' she answered, 'as you give me leave. Not to-morrow, but the day after. *Is* it not wonderful to have met you?'

'I don't know,' he answered; 'I live not very far away.' And then, raising his hat to the rest of the party, and shaking hands with Susan, he was gone.

'How could you,' asked Miss Chelston chidingly—'how could you think, dear, of saying we would go to Mr. Hilderton's studio? The thing is utterly impossible.'

Sir Geoffrey's daughter tarried behind Mr. Sudlow to make this remark, and her friend retorted,

'I never said *you* would go; but *I* shall.'

'Now, Susan darling!'

'Now, Marguerite!'

And the two women stood tall and lovely and defiant in the evening light.

'If you would accept of my escort, Miss Drummond,' said Mr. Gayre softly.

'O, how very, very good you are!' exclaimed Susan, turning towards him with that charming smile which seemed her greatest possession; 'I should be so glad if you would go with me. Not because I mind what Margaret says in the least. She knows, nobody better,

that Lal and I were good brother and sister always, and shall be the same, I hope, till the end of our days. But if you went with me, you might see some picture you admired, and then you could talk of it to your friends, and, perhaps, somebody might buy it. Lal is very, very clever; but—'

'Is that the Lal who did not jump the river at Chelston?' asked Mr. Gayre.

Miss Chelston had, apparently in stately disgust of her friend's frivolity and impropriety, resumed her walk with Mr. Sudlow.

'Yes. Poor Lal! I am afraid he will never jump any river anywhere,' said Miss Drummond sadly. 'Don't you know that sort of man? But, of course, you must be acquainted with all sorts of men. You know there are people who can write books, and paint pictures, and compose music; and yet not sell a book, or a picture, or a song. I am afraid Lal won't do much good so far as making money is concerned, and yet he has such genius. He did a crayon likeness of uncle, which was, indeed, his living self. Poor, poor Lal! Isn't he handsome?'

With a light heart Mr. Gayre agreed the young man was uncommonly handsome.

'I do not think it is well for men to be so very good-looking,' observed Miss Drummond. 'I know his beauty has been Lal Hilderton's ruin. His aunts denied him nothing, and the women about Chelston, young and old, thought he was a nonsuch. Poor Lal! I have often felt sorry for him. You will look at his pictures, won't you, Mr. Gayre?'

If she only could have realised the fact she had but to speak a little longer in similar terms to insure the purchase of Mr. Hilderton's whole collection!

CHAPTER XII.

HIGH FESTIVAL.

DAYS swept by. Since Mr. Gayre left the army, days had never sped along so quickly. All his scruples were gone, his painful self-examinations ended. He almost lived at North Bank. He walked and drove and rode with his niece and her friend. Save for an uneasiness he could not explain, an occasional doubt which would intrude, he was perfectly, utterly happy and content.

For some reason best known to himself—most probably because he wished at once to begin operations upon the widow's heart—Sir Geoffrey decided to accompany 'his girls' to Brunswick-square when the luncheon 'came off.'

'I think it would be only a fitting mark of respect to your kind friend,' he observed to Mr. Gayre; who merely said 'Very well,' and having duly apprised Mrs. Jubbins of the pleasure in store for her, announced that he would defer his own visit till some future occasion.

According to the Baronet's account everything went off delightfully. He knew he had made himself most agreeable. Mrs. Jubbins' acquaintance with that class of 'nobleman' (brought prominently before the public by the Tichborne trial) was indeed of the slightest. Indeed, she had never before known but one 'Sir' intimately, and he was only a red-faced, snub-nosed, loud-talking gentleman in the tallow trade, who had been knighted upon the occasion of some royal expedition to the City. In comparison with him Sir Geoffrey's manners when on good behaviour must have seemed princely. Indeed, as the widow told Mr. Gayre afterwards, his brother-in-law was 'most affable,' 'and I am so taken with

your dear niece,' went on Mrs. Jubbins. 'She is a most lovely girl, and so sweet and winning; but I can't say I care for her friend. What do you suppose she asked my maid?'

'I really cannot conjecture. Was it something very dreadful?'

'Very impertinent, at any rate,' declared Mrs. Jubbins; 'she asked her *if my hair was all my own.*'

'Miss Drummond,' said Mr. Gayre, when he next went to North Bank, 'may I inquire what induced you to put such a singular question to Mrs. Jubbins' maid as you did about that lady's hair?'

'It was not Susan, it was I,' explained Miss Chelston. 'I did not mean any rudeness, though it seems Mrs. Jubbins is very angry with me. So she has been complaining to you, has she?'

'Yes, but she said it was your friend. Miss Drummond, what are you laughing at?'

'I can tell you,' said Miss Chelston, as Susan murmured 'Nothing.' 'She is wondering if Mrs. Jubbins let down her back hair to prove to you it was 'all real, every bit of it; ' for that is what she did the other day, when expressing her righteous indignation to Susan.'

'My acquaintance with that back hair is of too long a date for practical assurance to be necessary,' answered Mr. Gayre, joining in Susan's mirth, which was now uncontrollable.

'Her hair is as coarse as a horse's mane,' put in Miss Chelston spitefully.

'O no, Maggie. It is not as fine as yours, but it is magnificent hair, for all that,' said Susan.

'I do wish you would call me Marguerite!' exclaimed that young lady. 'I have told you over and over again I detest hearing Maggie,

Maggie, Maggie, from morning to night!'

'I'll call you Griselda, if you like,' said her friend slyly.

'What I cannot conceive,' interposed Mr. Gayre, 'is how Mrs. Jubbins came to imagine you were Miss Drummond, and Miss Drummond you.'

'It was all papa's fault,' answered Miss Chelston. 'You know the ridiculous way he talks about Susan being his own girl and his favourite child, and his two daughters, and all that sort of thing; and poor Mrs. Jubbins, whom I really do not consider the cleverest or most brilliant person I ever met, got utterly bewildered. Besides, Susan set herself to be so very agreeable that I know I must have seemed a most reserved and disagreeable young person by comparison; and, of course, Mrs. Jubbins believed *Mr. Gayre's niece* could not be other than delightful. She still believes Susan to be me. For some reason, when Miss Drummond called the other day to inquire concerning the health of Mrs. Jubbins' ankle, she did not think it necessary to explain the mistake.'

'I thought it would be wiser to give her time to forget that little matter of the hair,' observed Miss Drummond.

'You had better try to make your peace, my dear,' suggested Mr. Gayre. 'I know no kinder or better woman than Mrs. Jubbins; and it will grieve me very much if she and you do not get on well together.'

'If I can make her believe I am really your niece she will forgive me readily,' said Miss Chelston, in a tone which told Mr. Gayre she understood the widow's feelings towards her uncle, and did not approve of them.

Indeed, the whole question had been very freely commented upon

by Sir Geoffrey and before Miss Drummond.

'I shouldn't wonder,' declared the Baronet, 'if they make a match of it yet. I think she'll bag her bird, after all. He's a strange fellow, but I daresay he'll settle down in the traces one of these days. I am sure he might have her for the asking, and I don't think it would be a bad thing for him, eh, Susan?'

'It does not strike me as very suitable,' answered Susan.

'She's not exactly his sort, but she'd make him comfortable, I'll be bound. With such a lot of money *any* woman must be considered suitable; besides, Mrs. Jubbins is not bad-looking, and she's a good soul, I feel satisfied.'

'Is not Mr. Gayre rich enough?' asked Susan. 'I should have thought it was not necessary for him to marry for money.'

'Bless you, my girl, nobody is rich enough. Gayre must have plenty; but I daresay he could do with more, and it would be an actual sin to let such a fortune slip out of the family.'

Susan did not say anything further, but she thought a great deal; and she often afterwards looked earnestly at Mrs. Jubbins, wondering whether Mr. Gayre would ever marry that lady, and supposing he did how his notions and those of his wife could be made to work harmoniously together. She liked Mr. Gayre immensely; but somehow she felt she did not like him quite so well since the Baronet broached that idea of marrying the widow for the sake of her money.

And yet he was so kind and considerate. It was he who made her visit utterly delightful. Margaret and she had their little tiffs and misunderstandings. Sir Geoffrey—well, Sir Geoffrey did not seem to her quite the Sir Geoffrey

of old. 'We go on,' as she observed so truly to Mr. Gayre; and oftentimes we find old friends do not suit us if they have not gone on our way. Much as faces change—age, sadden, alter—they do not change half so much as souls. This is what makes it so hard to take up a friendship again after a long separation. We may get accustomed to gray hair that had kept its sunny brown in our loving memory—to wrinkles—to dim eyes—to the bowed head and the faltering step; but what we never grow reconciled to are the moral changes wrought by time, the faults which have become intensified, the latent weakness we never suspected, the falsehood where we would have pledged our lives there existed no shadow of turning, the frivolity and the selfishness where we never dreamed to find other than high aims and noble aspirations.

To the young the process of disillusion seems terrible, and Susan found that to be forced to see her friends' faults was very bitter indeed.

Nevertheless, spite of Sir Geoffrey's eternal Jeremiads on the subject of money, and his daughter's jealousy, irritability, and lack of ordinary straightforwardness, Susan did enjoy stopping at North Bank. It was such a delightful change from the deathly quietness and dull monotony of Enfield Highway, from her aunt's lamentations, and the conventionality, not to say stupidity, of her cousin's intended wife.

Constant variety was the rule at Sir Geoffrey's: except when Margaret and she were alone together, Miss Drummond never felt dull.

'I daresay I should tire of the life after a time,' thought Susan; 'but a little of it is delightful.'

Flower-shows, concerts, exhi-

bitions—Mr. Gayre took the girls to everything that was going on. Sometimes Mr. Sudlow was of the party, but the banker never seemed particularly desirous of his company. He was waiting to see whether some better chance might not open for his niece. The closer he came in contact with that gentleman the less he liked him, 'and yet he is good enough for her,' was his deliberate conclusion.

Happiness, in those bright sunshiny days, made Mr. Gayre almost amiable. Dimly it occurred to him that if he married Susan he could then give Margaret the opportunity of meeting men of a different class and stamp altogether. He had quite made up his mind to ask Susan to be his wife; but he did not want to be precipitate. He wished to woo her almost imperceptibly, to make himself necessary to her before he spoke of love, and win her heart, if slowly, surely, and run no risk of even a temporary rejection. He could not do without her. She was the woman he had been waiting for through years—sweet, tender, spirited, truthful. Life seemed very beautiful to him then—well worth living, indeed.

Properly speaking, Miss Drummond's sojourn at North Bank was rather a succession of short visits than one continuous stay. Every alternate week she returned to Enfield, remaining there from Friday till Monday—sometimes for a longer period; besides this, she and Miss Chelston went to stop a little time with their old friends at Kew; and when Mrs. Jubbins took up her abode at Chislehurst she often had both girls staying there.

The widow was in a state of the highest excitement concerning a great party she meant to give. The Jones had celebrated

the change to their new house with a ball; the Browns had got up a picnic really on a scale of unprecedented magnificence; whilst it was known the Robinsons intended to ask all the world and his wife to a tremendous entertainment, when their new 'mansion' at Walton was ready for occupation.

'So I really must do something,' declared Mrs. Jubbins to Mr. Gayre; 'it would be a sin and a shame to have such a house as this and not ask one's friends to it.'

'Better give a garden-party,' suggested the banker; 'and then the young people can have a dance in the evening.'

So said, so done; the invitations were written and posted. Every one Mrs. Jubbins had ever known was asked, and a great number she never had known.

Sir Geoffrey begged her to give him some blank cards, and promised to secure the presence 'of a few young fellows well connected, and so forth.'

The Jones, Browns, and Robinsons, and many other rich families—all of the same walk in life—had each two or three intimate friends who wanted, of all things, to make dear Mrs. Jubbins' acquaintance.

Mrs. Jubbins even asked Canon and Mrs. Gayre and the Misses Gayre, and received by return of post an emphatic refusal. The widow was unwise enough to mention that she expected Sir Geoffrey Chelston and his beautiful daughter to be of the company.

'What a set your brother has got amongst!' said Mrs. Gayre to her husband. 'I should not be at all surprised to hear any day he had married that Jubbins woman.'

'Neither should I,' groaned the

Canon. 'There is one comfort, however, she is enormously rich.'

'O, I don't believe in those City fortunes,' retorted Mrs. Gayre: 'look at your father!'

'My dear!' exclaimed the clergyman, less in a tone of endearment than of mild remonstrance.

The garden-party, to which Mrs. Jubbins had bidden a crowd of people, and which she intended to inaugurate a new epoch, wherein 'she should enjoy her money, and have some good of her life,' promised indeed to be a unique affair. Where expense is no object it is comparatively easy to compass success; and on this occasion, if never on another, the widow announced her intention of not troubling her head about sixpences—a resolution which met with unqualified approval from Sir Geoffrey.

'In for a penny, in for a pound,' he said, in his off-hand, agreeable way; and then he asked Mrs. Jubbins how she 'stood' for wine, and offered to take all trouble concerning her cellar off her hands, by having anything she wanted sent down by his own wine-merchant, 'who supplies an excellent article,' finished the Baronet, 'and is a deuced nice sort of fellow.'

'Affable,' however, though the Baronet might be, friendly as well, and indeed on occasions homely in his discourse, Mrs. Jubbins was not to be enticed into taking her custom away from the houses that had won the favour of Mr. Jubbins deceased, and Mr. Jubbins' father before him. She would as soon have changed her church; sooner indeed, because in her heart of hearts she inclined to a moderate ritual, while the Jubbins had always pinned their simple faith to black gowns, bad music, high pews, and the plainest of plain services.

At every turn Sir Geoffrey's proffered suggestions met with a thankful but decided rejection.

For the commissariat department, concerning which the lady's ideas were of the most liberal description, Mrs. Jubbins felt that she and her butler and her cook, and the City purveyors, would prove equal to the occasion.

'I am not afraid of being unable to feed my friends,' she said to Sir Geoffrey; 'only how am I to amuse them?'

'Let them amuse themselves,' answered Sir Geoffrey. 'Gad, if they can't do that they had better stop away.'

He had laid out his own scheme of entertainment, and also given a private hint to Miss Chelston it would be wise for her to make 'some running with that Sudlow fellow.' 'Remember the crooked stick, my girl,' he advised, 'and while we are in comparatively smoothwater try to get a bit ahead. You mind what I say to you. If you don't, the time won't be long coming you'll repent having neglected my advice.'

Plants by the van-load, musical by the acre, relays of musicians, luncheon and supper from a firm of confectioners well known to City folks, waiters whose dignity would not have disgraced a Mansion House dinner. The Warren looking charming in its setting of green trees, guests alighting as fast as the carriages could set down, a hum of voices, dresses of every possible fashion and colour, ladies young and old, winsome and *passée*, girls and matrons, gentlemen in every variety of male costume, people who had respected Mr. Jubbins, and people who respected Mr. Higgs' daughter; the combined odours of all the flowers on earth, as it seemed, mingling with the sound of rattling china and jing-

ling glass. Everywhere a babel of tongues: guests sauntering solitary over the gardens, wondering how they were to get through the next few hours; groups chattering on the lawns; sunshine streaming on the grass through a tracery of leaves and branches; rabbits scudding away into the plantations; windows open to the ground, and white curtains swaying gently in the summer air; white pigeons with pink feet and wondering eyes looking down on the company from the roof; millionaires exchanging words of wisdom about 'stocks,' and 'Turks,' and 'Brazils,' on the terrace which once 'his lordship' had no doubt often paced. Mrs. Jubbins nervous, triumphant, handsome, her children in a seventh heaven of delight. Sir Geoffrey Chelston in a perfectly new white hat and pale-blue necktie, talking to everybody his discerning glance told him might be made worth the trouble. Margaret radiantly beautiful, in a dress which suited her hopes and expectations. Susan more simply attired in accordance with her certainties. Mr. Arbery escorting a young lady whose ultimate destination was Australia. Mr. Lal Hilderton looking handsome, forlorn, and discontented; a sprinkling of clergymen; a few unmistakable West-enders; this was what Mr. Gayre saw when he walked up from Chislehurst Station to The Warren on that glorious afternoon in August.

The number of persons who declared it was 'a perfect day' could only have been equalled by those who talked about Lord Flint and the Earl of Merioneth and the widowed dowager. Though all dead or absent, the 'noble family' seemed to pervade the whole place.

The rooms were inspected, their appointments criticised, the style of architecture examined in detail. Opinions differed as to the convenience of the residence as a family mansion; but every one agreed it was just the place for a party. Such a number of rooms, and all on the ground-floor!

'It is like wandering through the courts in the Crystal Palace,' said one young lady.

'As fine a billiard-room as I'd ever wish to see!' exclaimed Sir Geoffrey.

'Never could have believed any man out of Bedlam would build such a place; it is offering a premium to burglars,' grumbled an old alderman.

'Dear me, I should not care to sit in these great drawing-rooms by myself' cried a portly dowager, who, next minute, confided to all whom it might concern, 'I am such a poor timid creature, though—a mere bundle of nerves.'

'Just fancy lying awake at night and listening to the wind howling through the trees! I would as soon live in the middle of an American forest,' ventured a lackadaisical miss to her neighbour, with a shudder.

'I like it,' answered the neighbour, who happened to be Susan Drummond.

'You don't mean to say you *live* here?' in a tone of mingled awe and horror.

'No, but I stay here sometimes.'

'And where do you sleep? Surely not in one of those dreadful rooms with only a pane of glass between you and robbers!'

'I am not afraid. For twenty years I resided in a much more lonely house than this.'

'Really! I wonder how any one can do it; I could not! I should *die*!'

'Come into the garden, do,'

entreated a voice at Susan's elbow ; and, turning, she saw Lionel Hilderton.

Crossing the spacious hall, they walked together to the gardens, which were curiously planned on a sloping terrace, rustic steps, formed of logs laid lengthwise, leading from level to level.

'What a rambling sort of place this is !' remarked the young man irritably, as he regarded the evidences of wealth which met the eye at every turn ; 'and these huge gatherings are a complete mistake. I don't know a soul here.'

'You know me,' said Susan mildly.

'Yes, you of course ; but then everybody wants you ; and what a set of people they are !'

'Some of them seem very nice, I think,' dissented his companion.

'O, you find good in every one ; but they are a lot of dreadful snobs, you may depend. Of course I have not a word to say against your friend Mrs. Jubbins, though she has about as much appreciation of art as that cow ;' and Mr. Hilderton pointed down to the plantations, where a milky mother was seeking food under difficulties calculated to try her patience. 'She—Mrs. Jubbins I mean, not the cow—asked me the other day what I would charge to paint her a picture exactly a yard long. I found out she wanted it to put in a frame she had by her not worth twopence. Of course I said I could not paint to measure. If these sort of people do not know better they ought to be taught.'

'I think I should have taken the order,' said Susan softly.

'I would not, then. If I have no respect for myself I have for my art. To please you I consented to paint her prosaic self

and hideous children, but I feel I can't stand any more of that sort of thing.'

'You know I did all for the best.'

'Of course I understand that, and I am most grateful to you ; but you cannot think how trying it is. You remember that picture of "Esther" your friend Mr. Gayre said he would try to find a purchaser for ? Well, he sent a dealer—actually a dealer, a man with dirty hands and diamond ring, and heavy gold chain and thick nose, a Jew of the worst type—who had the impudence to criticise my work. He was good enough to say "Esther" herself was not so bad, and he was willing to buy that painting, though the perspective was defective and the minor figures unfinished. I told him he must take "Mordecai" as well—that I could not part the pair. He declared he would rather be without "Mordecai" if I gave him the picture ; but at last, finding me firm, offered eighteen shillings extra !'

'Poor Lal ! What did you do ?'

'Do ! I ordered him to leave the studio, and next day had a note, saying I could send a line "to his place" if I thought better of the matter.'

'So you failed to sell "Esther" after all ?'

'I was forced to take his terms. I had not a sovereign left.'

They went a little further without speaking a word ; then Mr. Hilderton took up his parable again.

'And to see all these people absolutely wallowing in wealth ! It is utterly heart-breaking ! Don't you think so, Susan ? now, honestly, don't you ?'

'Well, no,' she answered. 'If they can derive happiness from money and you from art, surely

it is better they should have their money and you your art.'

'But I can't be happy without money. I want ever so much. I'd like to be as rich as Rothschild, if I could.'

'In that case would it not be wise to accept as many commissions as you can get, even if the people who give them are not particularly interesting or beautiful? If I were you I would try to paint Mrs. Jubbins and her children as well as possible, and then she might get you more orders. To be quite plain, Lal, as you are in such want of bread-and-butter, you ought not to quarrel with it.'

What answer the artist might have made to this extremely wise speech will never now be known, for at that moment their *tête-à-tête* was interrupted.

'O, here are the truants!' exclaimed Miss Chelston gaily: she and Mr. Sudlow, coming from an opposite direction, met Susan and Mr. Hilderton somewhat unexpectedly. 'We could not think where you had gone; Mrs. Jubbins has been sending in all directions after you. Aren't you tired of walking about? You missed some exquisite singing; dancing will commence presently — you had better come in and get cool.'

'I am not at all too warm,' answered Miss Drummond; 'but I won't miss the dancing as well as the singing.'

'And remember I am to have the first waltz,' said Mr. Hilderton.

'You shall have it though you did not ask me before,' she laughed.

And then they all bent their steps in the direction of the house, Mr. Hilderton drawing his companion a little back in order to ask,

'Who on earth is that man Sudlow?'

'Haven't an idea,' replied Miss Drummond, in the same low tone; 'some one Mr. Gayre knows.'

'He is rich, too, I suppose?'

'I fancy so, but I don't know.'

'He has eyes for nobody but your friend Miss Chelston.'

'Your friend, too, or at least she used to be.'

'Ah, she is like every one else in this vile place. She cares for nothing but money.'

'I am sure you wrong her,' said Susan.

'It does not much matter whether I do or not. I am only a struggling artist. You see she scarcely speaks to me.'

'It is her quiet manner; she does not mean to be unkind.'

As they stood near one of the windows watching the quartette slowly ascending from terrace to terrace, Mrs. Jubbins was saying at that very moment to Mr. Gayre, 'Judge for yourself; I feel positive my idea is correct.'

'I should not have thought it; but ladies no doubt understand all these matters better than we do,' answered the banker courteously.

'And it seems such a pity, for she is so good and charming, and he is so poor and so impracticable.'

'We must try if we can't do something for him.'

'Yes, you are always thinking how you can serve others.' This was quite a stock phrase of Mrs. Jubbins, and one which Mr. Gayre had long ceased to deprecate. 'But I really can't see how he is to be helped,' and then the widow went on to relate the 'painting by measure' episode, and also another painful experience she had undergone in her efforts to 'bring the young man forward.'

'Dear old Deputy Pettell came down to call on me the other day, and you know what a judge he is of pictures; he has bought thousands of pounds' worth one time

and another. Well, I had got Mr. Hilderton to take my darling Ida as a shepherdess with a crook and sheep—such a pretty idea—and there was the portrait in the smaller drawing-room, and Mrs. Robinson and her nephew Captain Flurry and Mr. Hilderton in the other. Of course the painting instantly arrested Mr. Deputy. "What have we here?" he asked; and he put on his spectacles, and I was just going to remark I hoped to introduce the artist, who fortunately was at The Warren, when he said, "My dear Mrs. Jubbins, where did you get this awful daub? It is one of your girls, isn't it? I suppose that long stick she is balancing over her shoulder is meant for a crook; but those things can't be sheep—they have not even the remotest resemblance to that animal."

"What happened then?" asked Mr. Gayre, as the widow paused in her impetuous narrative.

"From the next room," answered Mrs. Jubbins, "there came this, quite loud and distinct: 'The man only knows a sheep by its head and trotters!' I declare, Mr. Gayre, I thought I should have dropped; and I felt so angry with Mrs. Robinson for laughing outright—as you are aware, the Robinsons never liked the Pet-tells. But don't mention the matter to Miss Drummond," added Mrs. Jubbins hurriedly, as that young lady, leaving her friends, turned to enter by the window. "I wouldn't have her vexed for the world!"

Time—relentless time—flew by. The afternoon had gone, the evening was going, the time for the last train coming. Everywhere, as it seemed, there was dancing—in the dining-room, the larger drawing-room, the library, so mis-called from the fact of a few vo-

lumes of forgotten magazines being there imprisoned within glass cases, locked and bolted as though each book were valuable as some old Elzevir.

The musicians were placed in the wide corridor which divided the private part of the house into two portions; and in the various rooms set apart for their use light feet twinkled in the mazes of the dance, and light hearts grew lighter and bright eyes brighter as the old, old story, which will never stale till the heavens are rolled up as a scroll, was told in words or implied in glances more eloquent than any form of mortal speech.

"There never was such a party." At last every one seemed agreed on that point—the many who approved of the affair, and the few who did not. As a 'social gathering' it proved a supreme success. No stand-alooism; no proud looks and uplifted noses; no 'How the deuce did you come here, sir?' sort of expression. The City did not seem antagonistic to the West, or the West supercilious to the City; while the latest fashion in suburbs did not disdain to ask a few kindly questions concerning 'dear old Bloomsbury.'

There a High Church clergyman was exchanging confidences with a wealthy Dissenter, who had given Heaven only knows how much to the destitute and heathen. Young Graceless was dancing with Miss Reubens, who was reported to have a fortune of a hundred and fifty thousand. Beamish, the author of *Fashion and Fancy*, brought to Chislehurst by Mr. Hilderton, was showing some tricks in the card-room, to the great mental disturbance of a few old stagers, who looked upon levity in the midst of a game of whist as a sort of an act of bankruptcy; while Sir

Geoffrey Chelston having button-holed Mr. Jabez Fallis, the great match manufacturer, who was then running a tremendous opposition to Bryant & May, had just concluded a deal with him for a pair of carriage-horses, subject to inspection and a vet.'s approval.

'The price may seem stiff,' remarked the Baronet (at the same time confidentially recommending Mr. Fallis to try some sparkling hock; 'the very best I ever tasted; and I thought I knew every vintage worth talking about'); 'but there is not such another pair or match in London—three parts thoroughbred; action perfect, temper ditto; except that the mare has a star on her forehead and the horse hasn't, might be twin brother and sister. Now I tell you,' and the Baronet dropped his voice confidentially, 'how they come to be in the market. Bless you, I know all the ins and outs of these things,' and as he made this perfectly true assertion, Sir Geoffrey poured his new friend out a fresh beaker of Mrs. Jubbins' wonderful hock. 'Graceless—that young fellow coming along now to get an ice for the pretty girl he has been walking with—who is she, did you say?—had, owing to a little misadventure—young fellows will be young fellows; but you can't make old dowagers understand that—got into the black books of his great-aunt the Dowager Countess of Properton. Well, he knew her ladyship's one weakness was horseflesh; so, as a sort of propitiatory offering, he got over from Ireland two of the sweetest things ever put into harness. They were just a bit wild at first, as all Irish horses are; they need coaxing and hummoring, like the Irish women, and then they'll go through fire and water and to death for you, if

need be. He and I trained them: took them here and there, first wide of London, then nearer and nearer, and into the Park, till they were at last just perfect; and then what d'ye think happened?'

'I can't imagine; perhaps one on 'em fell,' said the match-maker, lapsing into a once-accustomed vernacular.

'Lord, no,' said Sir Geoffrey; 'but the Dowager died. When Graceless went down to the funeral, he found his name not in the will. That was last week. There are the horses eating their heads off; and to come to what I said, Mr. Fallis, if they don't do their twelve miles, half country and half over the stones, in less than forty minutes, why, I'll eat them, and that's all about it.'

The hall was set about with great banks of flowers. Sitting, half hidden by ferns, palms, begonias, and a hundred sweet-scented flowers, that certainly were that night not on deserts wasting their perfumes, Mr. Gayreat length espied Miss Drummond, whom he had for some time past been seeking. She was nestling behind a great oleander, with a scarlet shawl wrapped around her shoulders, her hands idly crossed in her lap, and her head resting against the wall. Her whole attitude was one of listless weariness; and it seemed so strange to see Susan Drummond, of all people in the world, sitting apart idle and silent, that Mr. Gayre was about to approach and ask if she felt ill, when Mr. Hilderton, hastily brushing past, exclaimed,

'Come, Susan, this is our dance.'

'I think not,' she said; 'but, in any case, I mean to dance no more to-night.'

'The translation of which is, you don't mean to dance with me.'

'I intended you to understand my words literally.'

'If I were Mr. Sudlow your answer might be different.'

'As you are not Mr. Sudlow, and as he will certainly not ask me, there is no use speculating about my possible answer.'

'If you will not dance, then, come and have an ice.'

'No, thank you. Like a dear good Lal, do leave me in peace. I want to be quiet for a few minutes. I really am very tired.'

'The next time I ask you to do anything for me—' began the young man.

'I'll do it if I can possibly; but not to-night.'

'That is all very fine. I am going, Susan.'

'It delights me to hear it.'

'Perhaps some day you will feel sorry for this.'

'I do not imagine I shall; but you had better leave me now to try to get up strength to bear the regret you prophesy is in store.'

'Susan, I never thought I should almost hate you.'

'Neither do you hate me seriously, Lal; you will regret your words to-morrow.'

'Is Miss Drummond not well?' asked Mr. Gayre at this juncture, calmly and innocently, as though he had just come on the scene.

'I am only tired, Mr. Gayre,' Susan answered for herself; while, without deigning an answer of any sort, Mr. Hilderton, an ugly scowl disfiguring his handsome face, turned away abruptly, and strode out of the hall.

'I fear greatly you are ill,' persisted the banker anxiously.

'No, indeed; but I do feel very, very tired. I have been standing, talking, or dancing all day, and am beginning to think with Mr. Hilderton these continuous parties are mistakes. One has too

much for one's money,' she added, with a laugh.

'You are about the only person here who thinks so, I imagine,' said Mr. Gayre. 'Let me get you a little wine. Sir Geoffrey has been chanting the praises of some hock, as though he had a cellarful to dispose of. Will you try its virtues?'

'Not even on Sir Geoffrey's recommendation,' she answered. 'I think I will try instead the efficacy of night air. Anything to be quiet for a short time; anywhere to get away from the sound of those eternal waltzes and mad galops.'

'May I—will you allow me to accompany you?' and the banker's courteous manner formed a marked contrast to the rude familiarity which had characterised Mr. Hilderton's speech.

'I should be very glad; but I do not like taking you away from your friends.'

'I have not many friends here,' he answered; 'and if I had—' But he stopped in time, and drawing her hand within his arm in the paternal manner he affected, led her out on to the drive.

'The terrace is crowded,' he explained; 'which way shall we go?'

'Down towards the Hollow, please,' said Susan; and accordingly, winding round the end of the house, they struck into a narrow tortuous path which led to the plantations.

'How pretty it is!' remarked Susan, looking up at the lighted windows, from which the music floated out into the peaceful night, and sank tenderly down into the heart, softened as music and bells always should be by distance.

'Yes, not a bad sort of "Love in a cottage" place.'

'Too large for that,' she answered.

'What a bad character to give Love! Do you think he could not fill all those great rooms?'

'He might; but still The Warren does not fulfil one's ideal—at least my ideal—of Love in a cottage: three small sitting-rooms, if Love were inclined to be extravagant, a tiny tile-paved kitchen with latticed casement, a thatched roof, in the eaves of which martins and swallows make their nests—it is said martins will never build where man and wife disagree—a trellis-work porch covered all over with honeysuckle and jasmine, roses crimson, white, and pink peeping in at the windows. No, The Warren is too stately a cottage for ordinary lovers. The very place, of course, for folk of high degree, but not for common mortals. Do you know, I have often wondered how a lord makes love.'

'Very much like anybody else, I should think,' answered Mr. Gayre.

But Susan shook her head in dissent.

'I should say not, though of course I am no judge; for I never knew but one lord, and he was a dreadful old man. People said he beat his wife, and certainly she looked miserable; and I knew—

for I saw it—that he kept a book in which every household item was entered. You would hardly believe that the diary ran something in this fashion:

"At luncheon to-day: Mr. Gayre, Mrs. Jubbins, Sir Geoffrey Chelston, Miss Chelston, Miss Drummond. Game-pie, cutlets, blanchmange, stewed fruit: *nothing sent down.*"

'You can't mean that!' exclaimed Mr. Gayre in amazement.

'Indeed I do. The book had been handed to the housekeeper to convict her of some sin regarding three sponge-cakes, I think, and she showed it to me. I looked at a page or two, and saw my own name with this comment: "*Miss Drummond was helped twice to cold beef.*" O! and I remember also: "Mem.—Never to ask young Hilderton again; *he drank three glasses of old madeira.*" And poor Lal really did not know what he was drinking.'

'By the bye, I wanted to speak to you about Mr. Hilderton,' began Mr. Gayre. 'I could not avoid hearing what he said to you in the hall just now.'

'Yes!' said Susan, surprised; and she waited for the next words her companion should utter.

[To be continued.]

STORIES OF PICTURES IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

CORREGGIO.

THE relation of religion to the fine arts, whether of poetry, music, painting, sculpture, or architecture, is one of the most interesting chapters of human history, as it is one of the most fascinating subjects of human speculation. Never is this relation more picturesque than in periods of change, whether by transition or revolution, when it is necessary promptly to affirm, or gradually to arrive at, a canon of exclusion, rejection, modification, or entire and formal incorporation. To the baptised world the struggle of accommodation has never been so attractive as when the religion which the pious aspirations of to-day regard as the universal faith of the future sought, with different degrees of prudence or impatience, to consecrate to itself whatever was pure enough for assimilation from the beautiful conceptions which were left in existence as the graceful legacies of a retiring paganism.

When, for instance, Christianity first became the dominant religion of the Roman Empire, the superstitious forces of exploded or superseded doctrines were still vivacious and widely spread. It seemed, therefore, too hazardous that the temples of heathenism should be dedicated to the rites of Christianity, lest the taint of their former abominations should still linger about them. Destruction rather than conversion approved itself as the generally safer

course. A series of emperors, beginning with Constantine, carried on, with more or less of vigour, the process of demolition both in the East and West. In the East, the destruction of the temples was well-nigh completed by the Emperor Theodosius the younger, in the early part of the fifth century—a particular rescript occurring in the code called by his name that the pagan temples should be plucked down, as fit to be the dens of devils or unclean spirits. Honorius, the uncle of Theodosius, contented himself with closing the temples of the West, out of a feeling of respect for the former architectural magnificence of the empire.

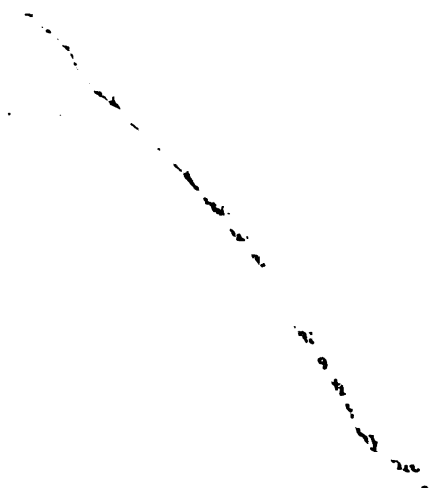
‘As we forbid,’ ran a rescript of Honorius, ‘the sacrifices of the Gentiles, so we will that the ornament of their public works be preserved.’

It was this æsthetic patriotism which saved, amongst others, the Pantheon at Rome, that ‘more than faultless’ structure, the characteristics of which have been summed up in a line of Lord Byron’s *Childe Harold*,

‘Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime,’

to undergo a subsequent conversion into the Christian Church of Santa Maria della Rotonda. This event took place at a time when the purer religion was fondly supposed to have triumphed over the danger of idolatrous observances.

In his ecclesiastical direction of





STORIES OF PICTURES IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

See 'CORREGGIO'.

the affairs of the Anglo-Saxons, Gregory the Great rather puzzlingly exemplified the practice at once of Honorius and Theodosius. In a letter, dated June 22nd, 601, to the recent convert Ethelbert, King of Kent, he exhorts that prince to 'suppress the worship of idols, and to overthrow the structures of the temples;' although in a letter, addressed *five days before*, to the Abbot Mellitus—then on the eve of proceeding to England, and afterwards successively Bishop of London and Archbishop of Canterbury—he had instructed him 'to tell the most reverend Bishop Augustine that he had, upon mature deliberation on the affairs of the English, determined that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not to be destroyed. But let the idols that are in them be destroyed; let holy water be made and sprinkled in the said temples; let altars be erected and relics placed. For if those temples are well built, it is requisite that they be converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God; that the nation, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and, knowing and adoring the true God, may the more familiarly resort to those places to which they have been accustomed.*'

About the year 609, Boniface IV., the successor of Gregory, at two or three removes, in the bishopric of Rome, obtained from the Emperor Phocas a grant of the Pantheon for the purpose of consecrating it to the Christian rite. Bede's simple account of this conversion is to the effect that Boniface, having purified the Pantheon from contamination, dedicated a church to the holy Mother of God and to all Christ's martyrs,

* Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*.

to the end that the devils being excluded, the blessed company of the saints might have therein a perpetual memorial. The sometime heathen temple, the structure of which was preserved unchanged, received at its consecration the designation of Santa Maria ad Martyres; and is now, as has been already indicated, popularly known as Our Lady of the Rotonda, or, more simply, as the Rotonda. Thus it was that, to the piety of that age, Christ seemed to be receiving 'the heathen for His inheritance.'

In the course of centuries the hieratic conditions of art had become so relaxed, or the reaction against them had become so established, that the very fables of Greek and Roman antiquity were introduced by the painters of the Renaissance into the ornamentation of religious houses and ecclesiastical edifices. Correggio, for instance, with whom our present remarks are more particularly to be concerned, about the year 1519, and by order of the Abbess Giovanna di Piacenza, adorned the celebrated Camera di San Paolo in the church of San Ludovico, at Parma, with paintings, of which the subjects are drawn from classical mythology. It is said that the subjects so selected were suggested by Giorgio Anselmi to the artist; who, however, was constitutionally ready to take or to follow any initiative in such a direction. For, as Dr. Meyer, his most recent German biographer, says of him, 'Correggio was innocently and unconsciously a born heathen;' a kind of reputation which has in more modern times attached to such artists in song as our own Keats, Landor, and Swinburne. Even in the sacred pieces of Correggio the same bias or tendency is detected by Mr. Ruskin, who relegates him, as 'in

tensely loving physical and corporeal beauty,' to the second rank of painters, with Paul Veronese, as distinguished from painters of the first rank, represented by Angelico, 'intensely loving all spiritual beauty.' 'In the work of Orcagna,' says Mr. Ruskin, in amplification of this theme, 'an intense solemnity and energy in the sublimed groups of his figures, fading away as he touches inferior subjects, indicates that his home was among the archangels, and his rank among the first of the sons of men; while Correggio, in the sidelong grace, artificial smiles, and purple languors of his saints, indicates the inferior instinct which would have guided his choice in quite other directions, had it not been for the fashion of the age and the need of the day.'

'He paints religious subjects,' are the corroborating words of Mrs. M. C. Heaton; 'but they are treated in an increasingly secular manner, and he appears glad to escape from what he felt to be the trammels of sacred art into the realms of mythology.*' Indeed the thoroughness with which Correggio identified himself with pagan subjects seems as indubitable as unanimous accusation or unanimous concession can make it. Of the 'Diana returning from the Chase,' which is the principal subject painted in the chamber we have referred to, Mr. Louis Fagan happily observes that 'it is a picture which would have well contented the heart of the ancient Egyptian as an embodiment of the beloved Isis, the prototype of Diana in his theogony; and it is a representation worthy to have adorned the famous temple of the goddess at Ephesus.'

In the groups which have acquired the collective and rather hybrid title of 'Diana's Cherub

Train,' and in the 'Youthful Choirs,' which are neither secular nor sacred distinctively, but rather distinctively human, Correggio reveals that wonderful force and sympathy with infancy which constitute the unapproachable charms of his representations of childhood. 'A great painter,' observes Mr. Ruskin, in a deservedly generous mood, 'will always give you the natural art, safe or not. Correggio gets a commission to paint a room on the ground-floor of a palace at Parma. Any of our people, bred in our fine modern principles, would have covered it with a diaper, or with stripes or flourishes, or mosaic patterns. Not so Correggio: he paints a thick trellis of vine-leaves, with oval openings, and lovely children leaping through them into the room; and lovely children, depend upon it, are rather more desirable decorations than diaper, if you can do them; but they are not so easily done.' Correggio's angel-boys are always noble and lovely; but still they are children, not mere spirits taking infant forms of life. 'Everything I see astonishes me,' testifies Annibale Caracci, who studied and imitated the manner of Correggio, 'particularly the colouring and beauty of the children, who live, breathe, and smile with so much sweetness and vivacity.' It need scarcely be added that the painting of children was with Correggio a labour of love, as was also the diligent study which he made of child-nature in all its phases. It was a thing to fathom, to analyse, and to understand, whether in its physical expression, or in its joys, its sorrows, its smiles, its tears, its anger, its light-heartedness, its mischief, and its passions.

It is in his capacity of a follower of Correggio that Sir Joshua Rey-

* *Correggio*, 1882.

nolds won the tribute that 'virtue is canonised in his manipulation, and infancy becomes angelic.' Sir Joshua himself writes: 'If I had never seen any of the fine works of Correggio I should never perhaps have remarked in nature the expressions which I find in one of his pieces; or, if I had remarked it, I might have thought it too difficult or perhaps impossible to execute.'

Correggio was of Parma, the birthplace of Francesco Maria Mazzola, or Mazzuoli, to whom it gave his art-designation of Parmigiano or Parmigianino. Correggio was of Parma; not, however, as the city of his nativity—for *that* took place at the small town in the Duchy of Modena, the name of which Art, as his sponsor, conferred upon him at his baptism into the hierarchy of painters—but by plentiful production, protracted sojourn, intimate association, and splendid achievement.

His reputation would appear to have reached Parma at an early period of his career; and it was on the walls of the cathedral, the churches, and the religious houses of that city that he elaborated the finest of his artistic conceptions. The city of Parma, situated on a river of the same name, in a fertile region of Northern Italy, was originally founded by that remarkable and highly cultured people of antiquity, the Etruscans. It became a Roman colony in B.C. 183; and, having in later times paid tribute to Goth, Longobard, and Carlovigian, eventually obtained the right of self-government. Thus it existed in republican principles until it fell into the possession of the Visconti of Milan, from whom it passed to the Lord of Verona, Can della Scala, and afterwards to the Pope. Seized by the great family of Correggio

in 1334, it subsequently became a bone of contention amongst kings, popes, and dukes, like the majority of cities and states in the mediæval era. At the date when Correggio appeared upon the scene very little progress, if any, had been made in the settlement of the political affairs of Parma, and considerable agitation prevailed during the greater part of the time that he was employed on the paintings which were to immortalise his name. In the year 1512, Pope Julius II. made his first strenuous effort to rid Italy of the French aggressors. Under Louis XII. they had taken possession of Parma as well as of Milan, which Louis claimed through his grandmother, Valentina Visconti. But the Pope's efforts were only temporarily successful.

Francis I., in prosecution of the French claim, retook Milan, after the sanguinary battle of Marignano in 1515; and again the city of Correggio's most illustrious labours passed under French rule. Pope Leo X., whose name will ever be remembered in connection with the Reformation, carrying out the policy of Julius II., contracted an alliance with Charles V., expelled the French from their new possessions, and once more annexed Parma to the Papal dominions. Such were the events which cast a deepening shadow over the age of our famous painter. So far as can be gathered from his biographers, however, these troubles do not seem to have interrupted the peaceful pursuits in which he was engaged.

The vivid and turbulent agitation of the outer world throws a romance over every production, every easel, and every fresco of such times as these. Happily, the arts flourish, notwithstanding the vicissitudes of states. Correggio,

working chiefly under the domes of sacred edifices, would, of course, be less subject to interference than elsewhere in Parma during this shameful period. That he likewise often worked in palace and studio, and that little fear was really entertained of foreign spoliation in and round about Parma, are facts which it is safe to deduce from the numerous pictures which Correggio was employed to paint for the wealthy classes of Lombardy, whilst visits were also paid to the scenes of his birth and childhood.

This, as has been already intimated, was the small town of Correggio, about twenty-four miles east of Parma, where the family of his father, Pellegrino Allegri, had been long established. Here Antonio Allegri, otherwise, and universally, known as Correggio, was born in 1494; and here he died on the 5th of March 1534.

In the dearth of trustworthy details of his life and fortunes, there have been much speculation and counter-statement. He has been described as anything, from a member of an ancient and noble house down to the squalid hero of even tragic poverty and misfortune. Truth is to be sought between these two extremes; and it is probable that Pellegrino Allegri was a substantial member of the commercial or trading classes of his native town. The researches of a series of biographers, however, have failed conclusively to ascertain the means by which Correggio attained in his art so singular an excellence as in some departments—as, for instance, in his supreme mastery of foreshortening and chiaroscuro—to be accounted without a rival, and imitable. He must have been carefully educated; for his works testify to his acquaintance with the principles of perspective, ar-

chitecture, sculpture, and especially of anatomy. He early attained proficiency, bounding at once, and *per saltum*, from the stage of immaturity and imitation to the grand elevation of originality and inspiration.

His uncle, Lorenzo Allegri, was an artist, and lived at Correggio, where Antonio Bartoletti, called Tagnino, was of the same profession. It is not improbable that they were his first masters; and that he may have continued his studies at Modena, Parma, and Reggio, which are the only towns, besides his native place, at which his presence can be traced, and where he would find works by Mantegna, Bianchi, and others, to move him to emulation. It is expressly said, to enhance the miracle of his achievements, that he never saw either Rome or Venice; and it is also pleasantly affirmed that Fate, which denied him the opportunity of a pilgrimage to these centres of the gorgeous and the majestic in painting, early in his career gave him the opportunity of beholding one of the grandest works of Raphael on which so much praise had been justly lavished. The contemplation of this picture was a revelation to him of his own powers; and he broke a protracted and reverential silence with the exclamation, '*Anch' io son pittore—I also am a painter!*'

The name of the great Venetian colourist is also brought into juxtaposition with that of Correggio. When Titian went to see the 'Assumption of the Virgin,' in the cupola of the Duomo at Parma, it is said that he was told it was not worth his notice, and would soon be defaced. To which Titian replied, 'Take care what you do; if I were not Titian, I should certainly wish to be Correggio.'

His reputation appears to have

marched rapidly, as if *pari passu* with the precocity of his genius. In 1514, when scarcely twenty years of age, he was employed by the monks of the monastery of St. Francis to execute a picture of their patron saint; and he is known to have painted many pieces, both in oil and in fresco, for churches and convents between 1514 and 1520. It was in this latter year that the fraternity of the Benedictines of San Giovanni at Parma commissioned him to paint the cupola of their church, a task to which, *inter alia*, he devoted some ten years of his life. The frescoes which he painted on the dome of this church rank amongst the first of his productions. They represent the 'Ascension of our Saviour,' who is surrounded by the twelve Apostles and the Doctors of the Church, all borne on clouds supported by a host of boys; and they are considered to be models of perfection, correct and grand in design, copious and masterly in composition.

'Correggio's best doing,' says Mr. Ruskin, 'is the decoration of two church cupolas at Parma.' One of these churches is that of San Giovanni, to which a few words have just been devoted, and which is situated immediately behind the Duomo; and the other is the Duomo itself, for which Correggio executed the masterpiece, representing the 'Assumption of the Virgin,' which compelled the exquisite admiration of Titian as aforesaid. This vast composition was a triumph over difficulties all but insurmountable of light and construction, and was finished in the year 1530.

In 1523 he painted his famous 'St. Jerome' for Briseida Colla, wife of Horace Bergonzi, for which it is interesting to know that 'he received four hundred gold im-

perials, besides some cartloads of fagots, some measures of wheat, and a fat pig.' Amongst other productions of Correggio which occur in the churches or galleries of Parma is the 'Virgin and Child,' which he painted in a recess of the Porta Romana, one of the gates of Parma. It was approached by a flight of steps, and from this circumstance the fresco derived the appellation of 'Madonna della Scala.' 'There can be no question,' says a modern critic and traveller, 'that this is one of the loveliest, if not the loveliest, impersonation of the Virgin that has ever yet been realised.'

Various works of Correggio are distributed over different parts of Italy and of Europe generally. Drawings and copies of his pictures are scattered through some fifteen of the public and private galleries of this country. About 1836 the trustees of the British Museum purchased an almost complete set of prints after Correggio, which had been formed by the eminent art-critic Richard Ford; and this collection is now arranged in seven large folio volumes. And there are in the same institution some genuine drawings by Correggio, which are well known to be extremely rare. He in general preferred red chalk, the softness of which admitted the use of the stump, by which he obtained the effect of masses and roundness. In this manner, besides some slight sketches of children, there is a very peculiar composition for a marriage of St. Catherine.

Of the three works by Correggio now in the National Gallery, the 'Ecce Homo' is, without dispute, that in which there is the most depth of feeling. 'The noble features of the countenance of Christ express the utmost pain,

without being in the least disfigured by it. Correggio alone could so paint this dark tearful expression of the eyes. How striking is the holding out of the fettered hands, which are of the finest form, as if to say, "Behold, these are bound for you!" This picture, which is a composition of five figures, attains one of the highest objects of art, in its purifying and elevating, by the beauty of the representation, the most painful suffering, so that it produces only a soothing and consolatory effect. 'Experts are inclined,' says Dr. Waagen, whose words and sentiments we are quoting with more or less of literalness in this connection, 'to fix the date of its production at 1520. Correggio was then, it is true, only twenty-six years old, but, nevertheless, in the seventh year of his art. Nor was this surprising when we remember that his great altar-picture, with St. Francis, in the gallery at Dresden, was painted in 1514, when he was only in his twentieth year.'

In the 'Education of Cupid' Correggio appears in a very different light, as moving freely in that domain of paganism to which he was born, as distinguished from the severer region of sacred art into which he was admitted by naturalisation. Here the sufficient aim of the artist was to produce the utmost loveliness; and this has been attained in the figure of Venus. Without being a perfect picture in all its parts and accidents of colour and drawing, it may be called at least perfectly exquisite.

The 'Holy Family,' known as 'La Vierge au Panier,' is a work of the rarest beauty and delicacy. Never, perhaps, did an artist succeed in combining the most blissful innocent pleasure with so

much beauty as in the head of this Child, who is longing with the greatest eagerness for some object out of the picture, and thus giving the Mother, who is dressing it, no little trouble. But her countenance expresses the highest joy at the vivacity and playfulness of her Child. In the landscape, which forms the background, Joseph is working as a carpenter. Near the Virgin stands a basket, from which the picture has its name. It bears, in all its parts, the stamp of the later period of Correggio; and the gradation of half-tints to the background illustrates the perfection of eye and mechanical skill, which appears like a miracle, and, among all painters, was possessed in this degree by Correggio alone. Unhappily this gem, presented by Charles IV. to the Prince of Peace, has been injured in some parts by cleaning.

We have already seen that the circumstances of the production of these works were essentially in the nature of romance; but the most suggestive romance of all is, perhaps, to be found in the history of their migrations and changes of ownership. The 'Ecce Homo,' for instance, for which the high esteem of the Caracci is evidenced by a copy by Ludovico in this Gallery, and an engraving by Agostino, of the year 1587, was formerly in the possession of the Counts Prati of Parma, and subsequently in the Colonna Palace at Rome. It then passed into the possession of Murat, King of Naples, of whose widow the Marquis of Londonderry bought it at Vienna. The 'Education of Cupid' has experienced singular changes of fortune, connected in a remarkable manner with the vicissitudes of earthly greatness and splendour. In all probability painted for the Gonzaga family, it

passed with the Mantua collection into the gallery of King Charles I. On the sale of the works of art amassed by that highly-cultured but unfortunate prince, the 'Education of Cupid' went to Spain, where it long adorned the gallery of the Dukes of Alva. Thence it came into possession of the Prince of Peace; and when his collection was about to be sold by auction at Madrid during the French invasion, Murat secured it for himself on the morning of the day fixed for the sale, and took it with him to Naples. After his death, his widow carried it to Vienna, where, as well as the 'Ecce Homo,' it was purchased by the Marquis of Londonderry. So many changes were necessarily attended with much injury, which was also necessarily followed by repairs; so that the late Madame von Humboldt, who saw the picture in the Alva collection at Madrid, laments its wretched condition in her sensible and accurate remarks on the treasures of art at that time in Spain. It has been early and repeatedly copied. The purchase-money of this and the 'Ecce Homo,' when the two pictures passed, in 1834, out of the possession of the Marquis of Londonderry into that of the National Gallery, is variously fixed at sums between 10,000*l.* and 11,500*l.*, the acquisition being reckoned at either of these figures a very desirable one.

The groups of angels, larger than life, which are to be seen in the National Gallery, are old copies of the frescoes in the Duomo at Parma, and, from the originals being in so bad a condition, are very valuable. They were formerly in the collection of Queen Christina, then successively in the Orleans and Angerstein Galleries. 'Christ on the Mount of Olives' is also an old copy of Correggio,

of which the original is in the collection of the Duke of Wellington; and its romance may be said to be one mainly of false pretence. On the authority of Mr. West and Sir Thomas Lawrence, who declared it was the original, Mr. Angerstein paid an Italian 2000*l.* for it.

It should not be forgotten, also, that the 'Holy Family' has a special history of its own—romantic, even, so far as romance can be predicated of picturesque changes of proprietorship involving financial considerations. Formerly it was an ornament of the Royal Gallery at Madrid, and, during the French invasion of Spain, was obtained by Mr. Wallace, an English painter. In the year 1813 it was offered for sale in this country for 1200*l.* The picture passed subsequently into the Lapeyrière collection in Paris; and when that collection was sold by auction on the 19th of April 1825, it was knocked down to Mr. Nieuerenhuis senior for 80,000 francs, and was presently sold by that gentleman to the National Gallery for 3800*l.*—a high but, as Dr. Waagen thinks, a justifiable figure for a picture only thirteen inches high and ten inches wide.

The wife of Correggio, Girolama Merlino, was so lovely as to have been supposed to be the original of the Madonna in the 'Holy Family' known as 'La Zingarella' or 'La Madonna del Coniglio,' a most beautiful and charming composition, representing the Virgin reposing during the flight into Egypt. It derives the first of the titles given above from the turban worn by the Madonna; and the second designation from the rabbit introduced in the foreground. This painting has been engraved with much spirit and faithfulness by Richard Earlom, in

mezzotinto. Correggio's wife died in 1529, having borne him four children, the eldest of whom, Pomponio, born in 1521 or 1522, was a pupil of Francesco Maria Rondani, and painted for the Duomo or Cathedral at Parma a fresco, representing 'Moses delivering the Law to the People.'

Correggio died suddenly at his native place on the 5th of March 1534; and was magnificently interred in the Arrivabene chapel in the church of St. Francis, for which he received his first important commission. Even in the article of death he was the subject of myths invented by the imaginative and received by the credulous. Vasari, and others after him, assert that he died of fatigue after carrying, with a view of saving expense, a large sum of money which had been spitefully paid him in copper, from Parma to Correggio. The poverty implied in this anecdote seems to be disproved by the fact that the family of Correggio consisted of four children only, and that his father, who survived him, left property.

In the case of no painter could an appeal be made for the suffrages of his fellow-craftsmen with greater confidence and success than in that of Correggio. The

most famous artists have been the first and the most enthusiastic in their expressions of admiration. Pages might be filled with their favourable verdicts; but it may suffice here if we repeat the words of Fuseli about that stereoscopic effect, that projection from the background, by which Correggio, with his felicitous contrivances in light and shade, added phantom substance to his various figures. 'The harmony,' says Fuseli, 'of Correggio, though assisted by exquisite hues, was entirely independent of colour; his great canon was chiaroscuro in its most extensive sense. He succeeded in uniting the two opposite principles of light and darkness by imperceptible gradations. The bland light of a globe, gliding through lucid demi-tints into rich reflected shade, compasses the spell which pervades all his performances. The art of painting had exhibited some of the highest effects of its power—the sublime conceptions of Michael Angelo, the pathos and expression of Raphael, and the magic tints of Titian; another charm was yet wanting to complete the circle of perfection, and this charm was found in the harmony of Correggio.'

A. H. G.

MY PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM.

Y^e front each other, face to face,
Dear friends of long ago ;
Your air serene but commonplace,
Your costume *comme il faut*.
Since ev'ry smirk and ev'ry smile
Came first beneath my ken
'Tis more than just a little while ;—
We all were younger *then*.

Tom, Dick, and Harry meet my gaze—
How much I liked the three !
As thick were we in early days
As four could ever be.
But why expect the glow of youth
From silv'ry-headed men ?
'Tis true, although 'tis bitter truth,
We all were younger *then*.

Ah, Mary Ann and Emma Jane,
My flames of other days !
Alternately, although in vain,
For ye I wove my lays.
By Fate my hopes were overset
(It boots not how or when).
Your married names I quite forget ;
We all were younger *then*.

Some errant stars are gathered here
Who nightly lit the stage ;
But very few to mem'ry dear,
Though lost to sight an age.
Do many look so lovely now ?
Nay, hardly one in ten.
My errant stars, you must allow
We all were younger *then*.

But let me not morosely brood,
Old Chronos, o'er thy flight ;
And waste, in sourly cynic mood,
My hours by day or night.
Dear friends, I merely pause to say—
Before I drop my pen
And put your photographs away—
'We all were younger *then*.'

HENRY S. LEIGH.

SLIPS OF THE PEN.

A VERY curious book might be compiled on the subject of inaccuracies, in many cases remaining unaltered in later and revised editions, which occasionally disfigure the works of even the most habitually careful writers. To these might be added specimens of the still more frequent typographical errors, often so apparently slight as to escape the notice of the corrector; but, nevertheless, sufficing entirely to pervert the meaning of the author. Under the above general title I have selected a few instances, both English and foreign, which I have myself noticed, and of the existence of which neither the reading public nor the writers themselves are probably aware.

In Mrs. Alexander's excellent novel, *The Wooing o't*, occurs a 'slip of the pen,' calculated to astound any one, even moderately versed in French dramatic lore, which, by some inexplicable carelessness, has been reproduced without alteration in the popular edition of that favourite work. During her stay in Paris the heroine is represented as having been taken by her friends one evening to the Opéra Comique, for the purpose of hearing—'je vous le donne en mille,' as Madame de Sévigné would say—Rose Chéri in *Le Domino Noir*! How the singular idea of endowing the charming actress of the Gymnase, of all people in the world, with a voice capable of doing justice to Auber's delightful masterpiece could have entered the authoress's head, I am at a loss to imagine; the artist in question possessing

just enough musical ability to enable her to get creditably through a vaudeville couplet, and not an iota more. I live in hope that this error may one day be corrected, and some other name—that of Mdlle. Cico, for example, who did sing Angèle at the Opéra Comique—substituted; the passage, as it stands, being to any one at all conversant with the lyrical drama of our neighbours a positive eyesore.

Another agreeable novelist, Mrs. Poynter, in the course of her very interesting story, *My Little Lady*, has inadvertently described the child, Madeleine Linders, as risking her two ten-franc pieces at the *rouge et noir* table of the Redoute at Spa; thereby completely ignoring one of the fundamental rules of that establishment, which expressly forbade all access to the play-rooms to 'children, domestic servants, and inhabitants of Spa.' This is the more to be regretted, inasmuch as the episode alluded to—one of the most attractive in the book—forms, as it were, the turning-point of the 'little lady's' life, and can, therefore, hardly be omitted without materially injuring the effect of the whole.

In Mr. Edward Stirling's lately published *Old Drury Lane* a strange *lapsus memorie* occurs. His cast of the first performance of *London Assurance* in 1841—with which, one would have supposed, so experienced an actor and dramatist as the writer to have been thoroughly familiar—contains no fewer than three important mistakes, easily to be verified by a reference to the

printed edition of the play, which lies before me. Instead of Bartley, Frank Matthews is credited with the character of Max Harkaway; Brindal, the inimitable Cool, is remorselessly transformed into Meadows; and Pert, one of Mrs. Humby's most successful personations, is incorrectly assigned to Mrs. Keeley. If any further evidence were necessary, a glance at Mr. Bourcicault's preface (he was not Boucicault then), in which he compliments the three artists in question in very flattering terms, would suffice to convince Mr. Stirling of his error.

While we are on the subject of the drama, I may mention an anecdote recently told me respecting an enthusiastic musical amateur, who had undertaken the herculean task of compiling an exact list of all the operas ever composed, together with the names of their authors. His classical knowledge not being precisely on a par with his good intentions, he is said to have somewhat rashly included in his catalogue the works of the prince of Roman orators, and to have taken for granted that 'Ciceronis Opera' meant Cicero's operas. I do not presume to guarantee the truth of the story; but *se non è vero, è ben trovato*.

When Lady Morgan was in Paris, collecting materials for her work on France, she naturally applied to her friends and acquaintances in that city for information on various topics; and on one occasion, while engaged on a chapter treating of religious matters, requested to be furnished with the names of some of the leading lights of the Church. Unluckily the person she consulted happened to be a notorious practical joker, who, unwilling to let slip so good an opportunity of mystifying milady, especially re-

commended as a subject for eulogy M. Labbey de Pompières, a well-known Freethinker and member of the Chamber of Deputies, subsequently described by the too confiding authoress as M. l'Abbé de Pompières, one of the most pious and estimable of French ecclesiastics.

Some five-and-twenty years ago, when Baden was at the height of its prosperity, Jules Janin, having been requested by the editor of a Belgian newspaper to contribute to his journal an account of the gay doings at that fashionable resort, accepted the offer, and forwarded to Brussels one of his raciest *feuilletons*, in the course of which he maintained that, taking into consideration all the attractions that M. Bénazet, the then lessee of the gaming establishment, had provided for the entertainment of the visitors, he ought to be regarded as the real King of Baden. On perusing the article, the conscientious editor decided, after a consultation with his 'sub,' that this paragraph required alteration, which was accordingly effected; and Janin subsequently discovered to his amazement that he had been made to say, 'M. Bénazet ought to be regarded as the real *Grand Duke* of Baden.'

The same writer, in one of his weekly *feuilletons* contributed to the *Journal des Débats*, inadvertently designated the lobster the 'cardinal of the sea,' a slip of the pen which naturally entailed on him a considerable amount of chaff from his colleagues. 'There is only one way to account for it,' said Théophile Gautier: 'Janin is evidently a believer in the theory that larks fall from the sky roasted to a turn; it is therefore not extraordinary that he should credit the lobster with coming out of the water "ready boiled."'

In a French topographical dictionary, published in 1853, I remember reading the following singular statement: 'Ham, a principal town in the department of the Somme, contains a celebrated fortress used as a State prison, in which Prince Louis Napoleon is at this moment confined.' On inquiry I learnt that the author of this trustworthy manual had contented himself with copying the notice in question from a similar work printed some years previously, and, notwithstanding the fact that the supposed prisoner was then comfortably installed at the Tuileries, had reproduced the article of his predecessor without the slightest alteration.

I find in my note-book the subjoined paragraph, copied verbatim from a number of the *Court Journal*, published in 1877: 'The other day nine members were blackballed at the Union Club.' Query, how could they be members if they were blackballed?

Equally unintelligible is an extract from the *Moniteur* (August 1864), describing a performance at the Académie Impériale de Musique, at which the King of Spain was present. 'The Opera, brilliantly illuminated, awaited its illustrious visitors, who arrived a few minutes before nine. At the same moment when their majesties' (the Emperor was probably of the party) 'stepped from the carriage, the diplomatic corps in uniform walked behind them up the steps of the Opera.' From this it would appear that, by some extraordinary display of ingenuity on the part of the coachman, their majesties were already at the top of the steps when they got out of the carriage!

It would be unreasonable to expect that in the rapidly printed columns of a newspaper, however carefully edited, typographical

errors should be things unknown; the omission or addition of a single letter often sufficing entirely to alter the signification of a phrase. Many of us remember the startling announcement that a gentleman had appeared on a certain day before the Lord Mayor, charged with having 'eaten' (instead of 'beaten') a cabman; and the readers of a widely circulated morning journal will hardly have forgotten the tempting advertisement held forth in its pages, on the occasion of the arrival in London of the Princess of Wales, of two 'widows' (*vice* 'windows') to let!

In France these misprints seem to be far more frequent than with us, if we may judge from the numerous specimens constantly quoted in the comic papers, a few of which, selected at random, are worth reproducing. At the close of one of his eloquent speeches, the statesman Guizot besought the attention of his hearers for a minute or two longer, saying, 'Je suis au bout de mes forces.' Fancy his horror on seeing the phrase reported as follows: 'Je suis au bout de mes farces!'

'M. Z. est risible' (instead of *visible*) 'tous les jours de deux à quatre heures.'

'We are happy to be able to state that Madame X., whose illness has caused her friends so much anxiety, is rapidly gaining strength. Elle commence à se laver' (for *lever*).

Three mistakes in as many lines, as in the following instance, are rarely met with: 'Le Professeur B. est mort subitement pendant qu'il mangeait (*rangeait*) sa bibliothèque. C'était un homme de rien (*rien*), connu par sa rapacité' (*capacité*).

I wonder what the members of our Cabinet Councils would say if their meetings were spoken of

in terms such as these, copied verbatim from the *Moniteur*: 'Hier, le conseil des *monstres* (*ministres*) s'est rassemblé.' Even the most violent opponent of their policy would hardly venture on so *monstrous* an impropriety, nor would any representative assembly be particularly flattered by the announcement that 'les fonds ont été *volés* (*votés*) par la Chambre.'

Carpentras, like Brives la gailarde, has enjoyed from time immemorial the reputation of supplying the world with materials for ridicule. It is, therefore, not extraordinary that the following communication from a correspondent should have appeared in the local journal:

'Notre ville est dans la désolation; les pauvres ont *pendu* (*per-*

du) leur meilleur ami, M. Anastase de W.'

One of the first duties of a secretary, anybody would imagine, is to study correctness of orthography. That such accomplishments, however, are occasionally regarded as superfluous by the party concerned, the subjoined telegram, dictated to a provincial colleague by a well-known financier, and copied by his amanuensis, will show. The missive, originally intended to run as follows, 'I have ascertained that the Crédit Mobilier will in future be superintended by three censors (*trois censeurs*),' conveyed to the astonished recipient the tidings that the affairs of that important enterprise would henceforth be under the control of 'three hundred *sœurs*.'

CHARLES HERVEY.

THE OLD BOOKSTALL.

A very Extraordinary Conviction for Murder.

AMONGST the collection of rare pamphlets and tracts from the Earl of Oxford's library, now preserved in the British Museum, is one on the trial and condemnation of Joan Perry and her sons, John and Richard Perry, for the murder of Mr. William Harrison, steward to Viscountess Campden, in Gloucestershire, in the year 1660.

On the 16th of August in that year this gentleman, being in his seventieth year, walked from Campden to Charringworth to collect rent, and, not returning, his wife, in the evening, between eight and nine o'clock, sent her servant, John Perry, to look for him. He also did not return. Early on the following morning, Mr. Harrison's son William set out for Charringworth, and on the way met Perry, who said the steward was not there. Consequently both went to Ebrington, a village between Charringworth and Campden, where they heard that the steward had called upon one named Daniel on the previous evening, but without staying. Pursuing their search in that neighbourhood, they heard that a woman, while gleaning, had found a hat, band, and comb, which, being shown to them, were recognised as the steward's. The hat and comb were hacked and cut, and the band stained with blood. They hastened to Campden, and alarmed the neighbourhood. Men, women, and even children set out 'in multitudes' to search for the body of Mr. Harrison, who had been, as they believed, murdered. In vain.

Suspicion falling upon John Perry, he was arrested and taken before a justice of the peace. He gave as a reason for not returning the foggy darkness and the distance, stating that he slept close by his master's house, in a field, until midnight, when the moon shone, and he went on, mentioning two men with whom he had talked. In the morning, at Charringworth, Edward Plaisterer told him that on the previous evening he had paid the steward three-and-twenty pounds. William Curtis also told him that his master had called at his house when he was absent on the day before. All these statements witnesses corroborated. Nevertheless, John was detained and sent to prison, and some few days after was again examined with the same result. But he made strange contradictory statements while in prison to different people, telling some that his master had been murdered by a tinker, others that a servant belonging to a gentleman in the neighbourhood had killed him, and a third party that his body would be found concealed in a certain bean-rick. At length he desired to see the magistrate, to whom he confessed that his mother and brother were his master's murderers, frequently and solemnly repeating the awful accusation. He described minutely all the circumstances under which the crime was planned, including the actual way in which the murder was committed by his brother in his and his mother's presence. He stated that he be-

lieved they threw the body into the great sink by Wallington's mill, behind the garden, while he kept watch, lest any one should see them. He did not return to them, but went towards the court-gate, where he met, as he had before said, John Pearce. The hat, band, and comb were, he said, left by him where they were found after he had hacked and cut them with his knife.

John's mother and his brother Richard protested their innocence in vain. They were arrested; but the body remained unfound, although it was sought for in the sink and every other likely place, including the ruins of old Campden House, which had been destroyed by fire in the civil wars.

When the brothers and mother were brought face to face, John still solemnly declared the truthfulness of his accusations; and when one showed him a ball of 'inkle,' which his brother Richard had accidentally dropped, he showed them a slip knot at the end of it, and sorrowfully pointed it out as the cord with which his master had been strangled.

The account referred to says: 'The morrow being the Lord's Day, they remained at Campden, where the minister of the place designing to speak to them (if possible to persuade them to repentance and a further confession) they were brought to church; and in their way thither, passing by Richard's house, two of his children meeting him, he took the lesser in his arms, leading the other in his hand, when, on a sudden, both their noses fell a-bleeding, which was looked upon as ominous.'

It was at this time remembered that in the previous year John Perry, when his master's house had been broken into, had accused his brother of that crime, and de-

tailed all the circumstances connected with it very minutely, although he afterwards confessed the entire story was pure fiction.

It was also remembered that some weeks before the burglary he was found making 'an hideous outcry; whereat some who heard it, coming in, met him running and seemingly frightened, with a sheep-pick in his hand, to whom he told a formal story—how he had been set upon by two men in white, with naked swords, and how he defended himself with his sheep pick (the handle of which was cut in two or three places).' A key in his pocket was also said to have been cut with one of their swords. When questioned again about these things before the justice, he re-asserted the guilt of his brother, but admitted that the men in white, the naked swords, hacked sheep-pick, and key were all imaginary and unreal. He stated, moreover, that the money obtained by the burglary had been buried in a certain spot in the garden. Search was made, but it was not discovered.

At the assizes in the following September the mother and sons had two indictments found against them, one for breaking into the house of William Harrison and robbing him of one hundred and forty pounds in the year 1559, and the other for robbing and murdering the said William Harrison on the 16th day of August 1660. Upon the last the judge refused to try them, because the body had not been found; but being tried for robbery, although they pleaded not guilty, after a whispered conference with some advisers in court, they withdrew that plea, and, confessing their guilt, were granted the King's pardon. But they were not set free, being still detained

upon the charge of murder, for which at the next assizes they were tried, and pleaded again not guilty. Then, to the astonishment of all present, John Perry, who had over and over again since the trial persisted in affirming the truth of his confession, denied its accuracy, and said he was out of his mind when he made it. Richard and Joan Perry also earnestly and solemnly protested that they were innocent, and Richard urged that his brother had accused others falsely, as well as him, of the same crime. The jury found each prisoner guilty; and they were all hanged on Broadway Hill, within sight of the town of Camden, the last words of each asserting their innocence.

In the year 1676 the man supposed to be murdered reappeared, telling a strangely romantic story to account for his mysterious disappearance, and proving that John Perry had actually told a false story to bring himself, his mother, and brother to the gallows!

His account, given in a letter to a justice of the peace, runs as follows: On a Thursday afternoon in harvest-time he went to Charrington to demand rents due to his mistress, Lady Campden. The tenants, being busy in the fields, came home late, and this occasioned his staying to see them. Instead of receiving a large sum he obtained only three-and-twenty pounds. Returning home, in a narrow passage among Ebrington furzes he met a man on horseback, and as this man seemed determined to ride over him, he struck the horse upon the nose, and received a blow from the rider's sword.

He fought with a stick until a second man came up and wounded him in the thigh; and soon after, a third appearing, he was knocked down, bound, and carried off to a secluded distant spot, where the men robbed him and threw him into a stone pit, from which they afterwards took him, filled his pockets with money, and carried him half dead to a lonely house upon a heath, where he was nursed and ultimately taken to Deal and put on board a ship, where his wounds were dressed. The ship was taken by two Turkish war-vessels, in one of which he was carried prisoner to Turkey and sold as a slave. Two years after he contrived to escape, daring terrible dangers and enduring painful hardships in his efforts to reach England, which were at last crowned with success, through the kind help of an Englishman from Wisbeach, in Lincolnshire, who discovered him in the last stage of destitution and beggary at Lisbon, in Portugal, and enabled him to pay his passage to London.

It was believed by many persons in Gloucestershire that the men who carried off the father were in the employ of his eldest son, who was desirous of succeeding, as he did succeed, him as Lady Campden's steward. The elder Harrison had held that honourable and lucrative post fifty years, and his stewardship had always given complete satisfaction. He had a life of prosperity, happiness, and seeming content up to the very day on which he disappeared.

A. H. WALL.

ANECDOTE CORNER.

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY E. S. DIXON—J. PALGRAVE SIMPSON—CHARLES HERVEY—LEWIS SARGENT—SURGEON-GENERAL COWEN—WILLMOTT DIXON—THE ANECDOTE HUNTER—THE EDITOR—AND OTHERS.

Coming Events cast their Shadows before.

AND the dark shadow of warning really existed, though few eyes were sharp enough to discern it.

When Prince Napoleon (Jerome) visited the United States, accompanied by his wife, the Princess Clotilde, their suite comprised, besides other persons, Lieutenant-Colonel Ragon and Lieutenant-Colonel Ferri Pisani. The latter gentleman published, in 1862, a graphic and interesting account of their voyage.

During their passage along Lake Huron, on board the North Star, a singular adventure occurred to Ragon. Baron Mercier, the Minister of France to the United States, happened to be one of the party. All the way from New York they had been thrown in the way of an ascetic and sombre-looking personage, although with a certain military air. On the railroads, in the hotels, on board the North Star, he was constantly on their steps. Evidently he followed them; and they had often noticed the attentive and piercing gaze with which his deep-set black eyes observed them all, and particularly Ragon. If they had not been in America, they would have believed that a paternal government had ordered this strange companion to watch their movements; for there was no mistaking him for one of those newspaper agents, who made no at-

tempt to conceal their interested curiosity, but who seized the travellers by the arm, demanding their names, Christian and sur, their vocations, objects, and other biographical details.

At last, one fine day, in the midst of Lake Huron, the man of mystery took a decisive step. As if unable to keep longer the secret which oppressed him, he went straight up to Baron Mercier, and begged a moment's conversation. Then, stating his name, which was Irish, and his position as major in the American militia, he said that he had every reason to believe that Ragon, like himself, was of Irish birth; that, consequently, he had no doubt of the French Colonel's sharing the sentiments of the immense population, of the same race and religion as himself, spread throughout the territory of the United States; that those sentiments were implacable hatred of England, the despoiler of their common ancestors, the mortal enemy of their unhappy brethren still chained to the soil of their ancient fatherland. Thereupon, the Major entered into the most extraordinary details respecting a grand and mysterious association, which, he asserted, embraced the totality of Irish-Americans, and whose object was not only to preserve and perpetuate in the New World their glorious nationality, exiled from the Old, but also to

ALL controversies that can never end had better perhaps never begin. The best is to take words as they are most commonly spoke and meant, like coin, as it most currently passes, without raising scruples upon the weight of the alloy, unless the cheat or the defect be gross and evident.—
SIR W. TEMPLE.

carry back to the land of their oppressors the evils under which their victims had groaned. He positively stated that this vast League was completely organised; that its financial and military resources were completely ready; that fifty thousand Irish, armed and enrolled, only awaited a signal—the occasion of a war and of European support—to invade England, and gratify, by burning London, the vengeance of which the Celtic race has retained in its heart the hope and the secret ever since King Arthur's death. He concluded by saying that Ragon's military reputation, gained at Malakoff, and his position in the French army, pointed him out, together with an illustrious Marshal, as the men whom Ireland would remind, when the grand struggle arrived, of their origin and of the wrongs of their ancestors.

These confidences were embarrassing enough for a Minister of Napoleon III. to receive. What-

ever allowance might be made for the Major's personal excited feelings, they were, nevertheless, based on the indubitable fact of the hatred Irish-Americans bore to England—a hate which emigration, instead of extinguishing, has rendered more bitter and terrible. Baron Mercier could not appear to listen approvingly to the revelation of a sort of conspiracy, however imaginary it might be. He got out of the difficulty by assuring the Major that he was quite mistaken respecting Ragon's nationality, who was French and Burgundian for generations past, and who consequently could entertain no political animosities inherited from Irish ancestors. At this the Major seemed utterly astounded—flabbergasted, as the vulgar say. He loitered around the party for a while, and then suddenly disappeared at one of the numerous ports at which the North Star called on the banks of the lake.

This occurred in 1861.

The Saving Quarter of an Hour.

THERE are five sights shown to strangers at Philadelphia: the spot where stood the tree under which Penn made his bargain with Delaware Indians, the text of the Declaration of Independence, the Mint, the Cherry Hill Penitentiary, and Girard College.

At Cherry Hill, the penal system is based on sequestration by day and by night, with obligatory work, and a quarter of an hour per day allowed to each prisoner for conversing with his keeper, the

Director, or with one of the charitable men who, through pure philanthropy, volunteer to act as chaplain or teacher. Note that this quarter of an hour's conversation is the capital and essential point; suppress it, and the prisoner goes mad, or dies. They tried at Pittsburg a cellular system without the quarter of an hour's grace, but were obliged to give it up.

The man w
communication with his fellows

CURIOSITY, from its nature, is a very active principle ; it quickly runs over the greatest part of its objects, and soon exhausts the variety common to be met with in nature. Some degree of novelty must be one of the materials in almost every instrument which works upon the mind ; and curiosity blends itself, more or less, with all our pleasures.—**BURKE.**

gradually betrays a manifest tendency to insanity, which in every case is developed in proportion to the obstacles put to communication with the outer world. When the sequestration is absolute, that result is almost infallible. In the Auburn Penitentiary, the prisoners are kept in solitary confinement only by night. By day they work

together, in common rooms, but on condition of maintaining the strictest silence. Under this system the prisoners preserve their reason. The mere sight and presence of their fellow-creatures, without any verbal communication, suffices to maintain the equilibrium of their intellectual faculties.

More Anecdotes of Foote.

SELWYN relates that on one occasion Foote, having received much attention from the Eton boys in showing him about the College, collected them around him in the quadrangle, and said, 'Now, young gentlemen, what can I do for you to show how much I am obliged to you?' 'Tell us, Mr. Foote,' said the leader, 'the best thing you ever said.' 'Why,' says Foote, 'I once saw a little blackguard imp of a chimney-sweeper mounted on a noble steed, prancing and curveting in all the pride and magnificence of nature. "There," said I, "goes Warburton on Shakespeare."'

'You are perfectly right, madam,' said Foote ; 'it comes from the word *idenourski*.' 'And pray, sir, what does that mean?' 'The feminine of idiot, madam.'

One of a convivial party at his friend Delaval's would suddenly have fixed a quarrel upon Foote for his indulgence of personal satire. 'Why, what would you have?' exclaimed Foote, good-humouredly putting it aside ; 'of course, I take all my friends off, but I use them no worse than myself ; I often take myself off.' 'Gad so !' cried the malcontent, 'that I should like to see ;' upon which Foote took up his hat and left the room.

One of Mrs. Montague's blue-stocking ladies fastened upon Foote, at one of the routs in Portman-square, with her views of Locke *On the Understanding*, which she protested she admired above all things ; only there was one particular word very often repeated which she could not distinctly make out, and that was the word—pronouncing it very long—*ideas* ; but I suppose it comes from a Greek derivation.'

Dining at the house of a gentleman where the Bishop of — was present, Foote was in high spirits, and talked immoderately ; when the Bishop, being angry at the entire usurpation of the talk by Foote, after waiting for some time, said, 'When will that player leave off preaching?' 'O my lord,' replied Foote, 'the moment I am made a bishop.'

WHEN once infidelity can persuade men that they shall die like beasts, they will soon be brought to live like beasts also.—SOUTH.

Foote was much bored by a pompous physician at Bath, who told him confidentially that he had a mind to publish his own poems, but had so many irons in the fire he really did not well know what to do. 'Take my advice, doctor,' said Foote, 'and put your poems where your irons are.'

A conceited young fellow was attempting to say fine things before Foote, who seemed unusually grave. 'Why, Foote,' said the small man, 'you are flat to-day—you don't seem to relish wit.' 'Hang it, you have not tried me yet,' was the caustic reply.

A well-beneficed Cornish rector was holding forth at the dinner-table upon the surprising profits of his living, much to the weariness of every one present, when, happening to stretch over the table hands remarkable for their dirt, Foote struck in with, 'Well, doctor, I for one am not surprised at your profits, for I see you keep the glebe in your own hands.'

Foote was one day taken into White's Club by a friend who wanted to write a note. Standing in a room amongst strangers, he did not appear to feel quite at ease, when Lord Carmarthen, wishing to relieve his embarrassment, went up to speak to him; but himself feeling rather shy, merely said, 'Mr. Foote, your handkerchief is hanging out of your pocket.' Whereupon Foote, looking round suspiciously, and hurriedly thrusting the handkerchief back into his pocket, replied, 'Thank you, my lord, thank you; you know the company better than I do.'

Quin and Foote had been for some time estranged, but became reconciled to each other, when Foote said, 'Quin, I can't be happy till I tell you one thing.' 'Tell it then, and be happy, Sam.' 'Why,' rejoined Foote, 'you lately said that I had only one shirt, and that I lay in bed while it was washed.' 'I never said it,' replied Quin; 'and I'll soon convince you that I never could have said it—I never thought you had a shirt to wash.'

The Duke of Cumberland (the *foolish* Duke) went one night into the green-room of the Haymarket Theatre. 'Well, Foote,' said he, 'here I am, ready as usual to swallow all your good things.' 'Really,' replied Foote, 'your Royal Highness must have an excellent digestion, for you never bring up any again.'

Hugh Kelly was mightily boasting of the power he had as a reviewer of distributing literary reputation to any extent. 'Don't be too prodigal of it,' Foote quietly interposed, 'or you may have none for yourself.'

Foote had attacked some pretentious person for his characteristic foible. 'Why do you attack my weakest part?' asked the assailed. 'Did I ever say anything about your head?' answered Foote.

Foote praising the hospitality of the Irish after one of his trips to the sister island, a gentleman asked him whether he had ever been at Cork. 'No, sir,' Foote replied, 'but I have seen many drawings of it.'

TO smell a fresh turf of earth is wholesome for the body ; no less are thoughts of mortality cordial to the soul. 'Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.'—FULLER.

'Why are you for ever humming that air?' Foote asked a man without a sense of tune in him. 'Because it haunts me.' 'No wonder,' said Foote; 'you are ever murdering it!'



At one of Macklin's lectures on the ancients, the lecturer was

composing himself solemnly to begin, when a buzz of laughter from where Foote stood ran through the room, and Macklin pompously said to the laugher, 'Well, sir, you seem to be very merry there, but do you know what I am going to say now?' 'No, sir,' Foote at once replied; 'pray do you?'

The Dulce, but not the Utile.

SOME years ago Lady B., the wife of a newly-created knight of a manufacturing town, saw in the house of a leader of feminine fashion some elegant *bottines*, the production of an A1 London shoemaker. Struck by their style and beauty, she eagerly asked for the man's address, with which she was furnished, and forthwith ordered 'balmorals,' in shape, material, and workmanship exactly like a particular pair she had admired in the possession of the leader of fashion aforesaid. The boots came; fitted to perfection; were worn at night;

taken off, put aside, and again asked for next day. Alas, they were completely worn out! The shoemaker was sent for. 'Those boots I received but yesterday,' said Lady B. indignantly, 'are already gone, and I only walked in them for two hours.' 'Walked, my lady!' replied the astonished Crispin—'walked! They have indeed been misapplied, ill-treated. My boots are never intended to be walked in; and for two hours, too—preposterous! They are made to decorate the feet, to look pretty; but to wear, never!'

An Anecdote told of Mozart.

WHEN Mozart was but six or seven years of age he was taken to Vienna to play before Francis I. in his palace. The child seated himself at the harpsichord; the Emperor stood beside him, the officials of the Court being several paces behind. Then the infant

prodigy in music began, and coming to the end of the page, said *volte subito*, 'Turn over quickly, sir, or the force of the movement and the beauty of my melody will be utterly lost.' And Francis, laughing most heartily, did as Mozart told him.

Take Care of the Pence.

THE late Baron de Rothschild once took a cab to his offices, and on alighting tendered the proper fare. The cabman received it, but kept his hand open and looked at the money significantly, which caused the Baron to inquire whe-

ther it was not right. 'O, yes,' replied the cabman, 'it's quite right, but your sons usually give me double.' 'They do, do they?' was the Baron's reply; 'well, they have a rich father, and can afford it; I have not.'

ST. PAUL first adviseth women to submit themselves to their husbands, and then counselleth men to love their wives. And it was fitting that women should first have their lesson given them, because it is hardest to be learned, and therefore they need have the more time to con it.—FULLER.

The Briefless Barrister.

As attorney was taking a turn,
 In shabby habiliments drest ;
 His coat it was shockingly worn,
 And the rust had invested his vest.

His breeches had suffered a breach ;
 His linen and worsted were worse ;
 He had scarce a whole crown in his hat,
 And not half-a-crown in his purse.

And thus as he wandered along,
 A cheerless and comfortless elf,
 He sought for relief in a song,
 Or complainingly talked to himself :

‘ Unfortunate man that I am :
 I’ve never a client but grief ;
 The case is, I’ve no case at all,
 And, in brief, I’ve ne’er had a brief.

‘ I’ve waited and waited in vain,
 Expecting an “ opening ” to find,
 Where an honest young lawyer might gain
 Some reward for the toil of his mind.

‘ ’Tis not that I’m wanting in law,
 Or lack an intelligent face,
 That others have cases to plead,
 While I have to plead for a case.

‘ O, how can a modest young man
 E’er hope for the smallest progression ?
 The profession’s already so full
 Of lawyers so full of profession !’

While thus he was strolling around,
 His eye accidentally fell
 On a very deep hole in the ground,
 And he sighed to himself, ‘ It is well !’

To curb his emotions he sat
 On the curb-stone the space of a minute,
 Then cried, ‘ Here’s an opening at last !’
 And in less than a jiffy was in it !

Next morning twelve citizens came
 (’Twas the coroner bade them attend),
 To the end that it might be determined
 How the man had determined his end !

NONE but the dissolute among the poor look upon the rich as their natural enemies, or desire to pillage their houses and divide their property. None but the dissolute among the rich speak in opprobrious terms of the vices and follies of the poor.—JOHN RUSKIN.

‘The man was a lawyer, I hear,’

Quoth the foreman who sat on the corse ;

‘A lawyer? Alas!’ said another,

‘Undoubtedly died of remorse!’

A third said, ‘He knew the deceased,

An attorney well versed in the laws ;

And as to the cause of his death,

‘Twas no doubt from the want of a cause.’

The jury decided at length,

After solemnly weighing the matter,

‘That the lawyer was drowned, because

He could not keep his head above water!’

JOHN GODFREY Saxe.

Napoleon's Roast Chicken.

OF Napoleon's private life he (Baron Bülow, the Prussian Minister) told an anecdote which, related of any other man, would not be worth repeating. He was extremely uncertain in his breakfast-hour, sometimes as early as eight o'clock, and varying from that till eleven. His constant dish was a roast chicken. One day he sent for his cook, and said, ‘I do

not know how it is, but at whatever hour I call for my breakfast my chicken is always ready, and always in right condition.’ ‘Sire,’ said the cook, ‘the reason is that every quarter of an hour I put a fresh chicken down to roast, so that your majesty is sure always to have it in perfection.’—*Recollections of John Adolphus.*

‘Little Commissions.’

A CERTAIN Sicilian priest was wont to repair every spring from Palermo to Naples on business, and being of a kind good-natured disposition, and passing rich, had many friends who, on his departure, were in the habit of charging him with many commissions, all which the priest would faithfully execute. Ready enough were these friends to receive on his return the various items of these commissions, but not so ready with the coin to reimburse the expense, which frequently they never repaid. Finding this practice a losing concern,

the priest resolved to change his line of conduct, and soon found an expedient in his difficulty. Charged, therefore, again with a host of commissions, he, on his next voyage, begged of his friends to write their separate demands upon a slip of paper. ‘Twas done as he required ; but none of them thought of supplying the cost of the objects required save one, who put some ducats in his hand for the purchase of a literary work then much in vogue.

The priest started, and returned ; but none of his friends save the

OUT of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh ; and our best abundance of the heart must be slowly and in quietness prepared. The cattle, when they rest, are yet working to prepare from the grass that sweetest and most wholesome of beverages, milk. So must we prepare the abundance of the heart. If the milk of our word is to flow from us nourishingly we must turn the common things of daily life—the grass—by slow and quiet processes, into sweet wisdom. In retired meditative hours the digesting and secreting powers of the spirit act ; and thus ourselves are nourished, and we store nourishment for others.—T. T. LYNCH (*Memorials of Theophilus Trinal, Student*).

last mentioned received anything they expected.

'How is this? What is the cause?' &c., was the general inquiry.

With obliging courtesy, the priest then answered, 'A misfortune happened to me which prevented my executing your commissions. Embarking at Naples, at the moment of our departure I drew out the memoranda of your demands, and placed them on the deck beside me, not only to take account of them, but also of their cost. Suddenly, however, a gust of wind carried them all away

overboard. You may imagine, sirs, my grief; but it was not my fault.'

'You are making game of us,' was here the general cry. 'Have you not brought the works of Filangieri, then, for this gentleman?'

'Yes, that is the only thing I have brought, and this was because I had placed upon his memorandum the ducats he gave me for the cost of the book, and their weight saved the paper.'

Sullenly, and with discontent, and not without murmurs, the priest's friends here left him.

A Lad in his Day.

WHEN Dr. Thompson, a distinguished Scotch clergyman, was minister of Markinch, he happened to preach from the text, 'Look not upon wine when it is red in the cup,' from which he made a most eloquent and impressive discourse against drunkenness, stating its fatal effects on the head, heart, and purse. Several of his observations were levelled at two cronies with whom he was well acquainted, who frequently poured out liba-

tions to the rosy god. At the dismissal of the congregation the two friends met, the doctor being close behind them. 'Did you hear him, Johnnie?' quoth the one. 'Did I hear 't? Wha didna hear 't? I ne'er winked an e'e the hail sermon.' 'Aweel, and what thought ye o't?' 'Adeed, David, I think he's been a lad in his day, or he couldna ken'd sae weel about it! Ah, he's been a slee hand, the meenister!'

Stopping a Paper.

A good story is told of Mr. Swain, the former proprietor of the *Philadelphia Daily Ledger*. By his course in some public ques-

tion, on which different persons had different opinions, Mr. Swain offended a number of readers, one of whom met him in Chestnut-

THE VALUE OF IDIOM.—I have been careful to retain as much idiom as I could, often at the peril of being called ordinary and vulgar. Nations in a state of decay lose their idiom, which loss is always precursory to that of freedom. What your father and your grandfather used as an elegance in conversation is now abandoned to the populace, and every day we miss a little of our own and collect a little from strangers: this prepares us for a more intimate union with them, in which we merge at last altogether. Every good writer has much idiom; it is the life and spirit of language; and none such ever entertained a fear or apprehension that strength and sublimity were to be lowered and weakened by it.—
WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

street and thus accosted him: 'Mr. Swain, I've stopped the *Ledger*.' 'What is that you say, sir?' 'I've stopped the *Ledger*,' was the stern reply. 'Is it possible?' said Mr. Swain. 'My dear sir, what do you mean? Come with me to my office.' And taking the man with him, he entered the office at Third and Chestnut Streets. There they found the clerks busy at their desks; then they ascended to the editorial rooms and composing-rooms, where they found everything was going

on as usual; finally they descended to the machine-rooms, where the engines were at work. 'I thought you told me that you had stopped the *Ledger*?' said Mr. Swain. 'So I have,' said the offended subscriber. 'Well, I don't see the stoppage. The *Ledger* seems to be going on.' 'O, I mean to say—that is—that I—ah—had stopped taking it.' 'Is that all?' exclaimed Mr. Swain; 'why, my dear sir, you don't know how you alarmed me.'

Anecdote of Carlyle.

A good story is told of Thomas Carlyle. It is said that a lady who lived near him kept Cochin China fowls, and the crowing was such a nuisance that the philosopher sent in to complain of it. The lady appealed to was indignant. 'Why,'

she said, 'the fowls only crow four times a day, and how can Mr. Carlyle be seriously annoyed at that?' 'The lady forgets,' was the characteristic rejoinder, 'the pain I suffer in waiting for those four crows.'

Mr. Disraeli and the Irish Members.

A good many years ago a genuine Hibernian, of somewhat colourless politics, was returned by an obscure Irish constituency, and, on his arrival at St. Stephen's, the whips of both parties were anxious to secure him as a supporter. Towards this end Viscountess Beaconsfield (then Mrs. Disraeli) sent him an invitation-card. During the evening the company got dispersed into groups, in one of which were Disraeli and the

new member, who had been thoroughly overpowered by the brilliant conversation and elegant condescension of his host, to whom, by way of compliment, he said in the purest brogue, 'I niver read your novels myself, but my daughters have, and, bedad, they say they're moighty clever!' 'Sir,' said Disraeli, drawing himself up, and looking his admirer full in the face, 'that is fame!'

VARIOUS the roads of life ; in one
 All terminate, one lonely way
 We go ; and ' Is he gone ?'
 Is all our best friends say.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

The Prime of Life.

IN Mr. Samuel Smiles's *Character* appears the following anecdote of Lord Palmerston: A friend one day asked his lordship when he considered a man to be in the prime of life. The immediate reply

was, ' Seventy-nine ! But,' he added, with a twinkle in his eye, ' as I have just entered my eightieth year, perhaps I am myself a little past it.'

Good Breeding.

SHERIDAN once told a story of the exquisite good breeding of a banker's clerk, of whom the wit had borrowed some money, and to whom he actually repaid it. ' Didn't he look astonished ?' asked a discourteous friend. ' No,' said

Sheridan ; ' he was just going to look astonished, when he remembered his manners, and swept away the money as unconcernedly as if he had not given up any idea of seeing it again.'

The Don at Bay.

I HAVE never seen in print this capital story of one of the most popular and learned heads of houses at Oxford. Not long ago an undergraduate of B. College fell sick, and his sister came up to nurse him. The master also took pity on the youth, and occasionally visited his bedside, where he made the acquaintance of the handsome and interesting nurse. When the disease had been vanquished, and the patient was out of danger, his sister packed up her things, and prepared to go home. But wishing before she left to express her gratitude to the master for his attention to her brother, and having also another and more delicate affair in hand, she called at the Lodge, and was shown into the worthy man's sanctum. There followed an interchange of thanks and compliments, the master assuring her that he had been more than amply rewarded for doing his duty by the

pleasure of making her acquaintance.

The artful lady now began to blush and stammer, as though what she had to say was sticking in her throat ; but at last, encouraged by the kind manner of her companion, she got out some words to the following effect :

' Mr. J., I have a great favour to ask you. You will think me very bold—but, after all that has passed, perhaps—I want to ask if—if you will marry me !'

The master started up in great agitation. He may (for heads of houses have much in them that smacks of the foibles and weakness of humanity) have felt a transitory glow of affection towards the sister of his pupil, and her appeal may have touched a chord in his hyper-hellenised heart. He strode with unsteady gait across the study carpet, his hands clasped under his coat-tails, and his brain busy with the problem which had been

IMAGINARY evils soon become real ones by indulging our reflections on them ; as he who in a melancholy fancy sees something like a face on the wall or the wainscot can, by two or three touches with a lead pencil, make it look visible, and agreeing with what he fancied.—SWIFT.

so abruptly set before him. As he walked to and fro his tongue was loosed, and he muttered, in a scarcely audible voice,

'Bad for both of us ! Bad for both of us !'

And then it is recorded that the lady was unable to restrain herself, and that she interrupted the reverie of the veteran with a merry peal of laughter.

'O, Mr. J.,' she said, 'I am

afraid you have somewhat misunderstood me. The fact is that I am engaged to be married to one of my brother's friends, and I thought it would be so nice if you would consent to perform the ceremony !'

The master frowned and took himself to task ; but I believe that he granted the maiden's prayer.

L. S.

Anecdote of Lincoln.

AN officer of the American Government called one day at the White House, and introduced a clerical friend from New York to President Lincoln. 'Mr. President,' says he, 'allow me to present to you my friend, the Rev. Mr. F. Mr. F. has expressed a desire to have some conversation with you, and I am happy to be the means of introducing him.' The President shook hands with Mr. F., and, desiring him to be seated, took a seat himself. Then,

his countenance having assumed a patient appearance, he said, 'I am now ready to hear what you have to say.' 'I merely called to pay my respects to you, and, as one of the million, to assure you of my hearty sympathy and support.' 'My dear sir,' said the President, rising promptly, his face showing instant relief, and with both hands clasping that of the visitor, 'I am very glad to see you, indeed. I thought you had come to preach to me.'

Human Nature.

THE *Moniteur* in 1815, then the organ of Louis XVIII., thus from day to day recorded the progress of the first Napoleon from Elba to Paris : 'The anthropophagist has escaped.' 'The Corsican ogre has landed.' 'The tiger is coming.' 'The monster has slept at Grenoble.' 'The tyrant has arrived at Lyons.' 'The

usurper has been seen in the environs of Paris.' 'Buonaparte advances toward, but will never enter, the capital.' 'Napoleon will be under our ramparts to-morrow.' 'His Imperial Majesty entered the Tuileries on the 21st of March, in the midst of his faithful subjects.'

A Remark from the Gallery.

PERFORMING at a country theatre, Mrs. Siddons was taking poison in the last act of a gloomy play,

when a bumpkin in the gallery called out, '*That's right, Molly ; soap it oop, mu lass !*'

LAWS are generally found to be nets of such a texture as the little creep through, the great break through, and the middle size are alone entangled in.—SHENSTONE.

Anecdotes of Sheridan.

SHERIDAN preserved his pleasantry and keen perception of the ridiculous almost as long as life lasted. A solicitor, Mr. R. W., who had been much favoured in wills, waited on Sheridan; after he had left, another friend came in, to whom Sheridan said, 'My friends have been very kind in calling upon me, and offering their services in their respective ways. Dick W. has just been here with his will-making face.'

An elderly maiden lady, an inmate of a country house at which Sheridan was passing a few days, expressed an inclination to take a stroll with him, but he excused himself on account of the badness of the weather. Shortly afterwards she met him sneaking out alone. 'So, Mr. Sheridan,' said she, 'it has cleared up.' 'Yes, madam,' was the reply; 'it certainly has cleared up enough for one, but not enough for two;' and off he went.

During Sheridan's last illness the medical attendants, apprehending that they would be obliged to perform an operation on him, asked him if he 'had ever undergone one.' 'Never,' replied Sheridan, 'except when sitting for my picture, or having my hair cut.'

When a proposal was made to lay a tax upon milestones, Sheridan declared that it would be unfair, as they could not meet to remonstrate.

Looking over a number of the *Quarterly Review* one day at Brooks's, Sheridan said, in reply to a gentleman who observed that the editor, Mr. Gifford, had boasted of his power of conferring and distributing literary reputation, 'Very likely; and in the present instance I think he has done it so profusely as to have left none for himself.'

'Old Shadrach.'

THE almost constant impecuniosity of the late Charles Mathews is a world-known fact. During the time he was engaged at the Haymarket, when under the management of the late Benjamin Webster, Mathews was frequently besieged at the theatre by harpies of the law. One evening Charles came to Webster and said, 'There is old Shadrach in my dressing-room—swears he won't go away unless I give him some money. Will you advance me some till Saturday?' But Webster was obstinate, and observed that he had

done this so often that he must decline to accede to the request. Charles retired, and had a second interview with Mr. Shadrach. In a few minutes the vivacious comedian returned, his eye sparkling, and his face radiant with joy. 'Shadrach has gone away perfectly satisfied with my explanations and promises, and given me twenty pounds into the bargain.' In another minute the actor was rattling through one of his patter songs as if there were no such things as creditors in the world.

AS sins proceed they ever multiply, and, like figures in arithmetic, the last stands for more than all that went before it.—SIR T. BROWN.

Louis Philippe and the 'Marseillaise.'

THE following anecdote was related to me many years ago by the Vicomte d'Arlincourt, the well-known author of *Le Solitaire*:

The accession of the 'Citizen King' to the throne in 1830 gave rise to a wicked practical joke, the author of which was no other than Edouard Ourliac, one of the literary Bohemians of the period. Bearing in his hand a tricolour flag, and accompanied by a troop of ragamuffins, he took up his position for several days successively under the windows of the Tuilleries, and shouted 'Vive le Roi!' until the newly-elected monarch, gratified by this display of popular enthusiasm, stepped out

on the balcony, and, in compliance with the reiterated request of his professed admirers, graciously favoured them with a verse of the 'Marseillaise.' Perceiving, however, at length that this *scie* threatened to become chronic, the King determined on putting a stop to it even at the risk of unpopularity; so that on the next appearance of Ourliac and his band they were politely escorted into the Rue de Rivoli by a detachment of *sergents de ville*, with the intimation that any further invasion of the royal privacy would subject them to an acquaintance with the interior of the Préfecture de Police.

C. H.

Anecdote of Christopher North.

WHEN Mr. Aytoun was wooing Miss Wilson, daughter of 'Christopher North,' he obtained the lady's consent conditionally on that of her father's being gained. This Mr. Aytoun was much too shy to ask, and he prevailed upon the young lady to ask for it herself. 'We must deal tenderly with his feelings,' said hearty old

Christopher. 'I'll write my reply on a slip of paper and pin it to your back.' 'Papa's answer is on the back of my dress,' said Miss Jane, as she entered the drawing-room. Turning her round, the delighted suitor read the following words: 'With the author's compliments.'

A Ready Reckoner.

It is related that when, at the Franco-German peace preliminaries, the sum of milliards—which sat so lightly on France—was mentioned by Bismarck, Jules Favre appeared utterly speechless with horror. When he had recovered from the paroxysm, all he could say was 'that even if one were to count from the time of Christ till now, one could not

manage to count such an enormous sum;' upon which Bismarck replied, with a smile, 'Don't let that distress you; I have thought of that, and, therefore, brought this gentleman,' pointing to Bleichroeder, the Jewish banker, 'with me. He counts from the creation of the world.' In reckoning time, the Jews pay no regard to the Christian era.

PERSONS extremely reserved are like old enamelled watches, which had painted covers that hindered your seeing what o'clock it was.—WALPOLE.

Dr. Parr's Love-Letter.

THE following is Dr. Parr's first and only love-letter to the lady who became his wife. In appealing to the curiosity rather than the heart of the lady, he displayed at the same time his modesty and his knowledge of woman.

'Madam,—You are a very charming woman, and I should be happy to obtain you as a wife. If you accept my proposal, I will tell you who was the author of *Junius*.—SAMUEL PARR.'

Bad Spelling in Wakefield.

CHARLES MATHEWS once went to Wakefield, then, from commercial failures, in a dreadful state. In vain did he announce his inimitable *Youthful Days*—the Yorkshiremen came not. When he had progressed to Edinburgh a friend asked him if he had made much

money in Wakefield. 'Not a shilling!' was the reply. 'Not a shilling?' repeated his astonished acquaintance. 'Why, didn't you go there to star?' 'Yes,' replied Mathews, with mirthful mournfulness, 'but they spell it with a "ve" in Wakefield.'

'Tis a bad Look-out when your Husband won't be Serious.

It was Saturday, a day devoted to cleaning and scrubbing in Oakland House, Natal. The mistress called out to her husband and brother, as they went to see to the field-work, 'I shall send you out your luncheons, dears. I am busy with house-work, and cannot have men muddling about indoors.' 'We understand, wife.

Your brother here often has an attack of *cacoëthes scribendi*. You have only to exchange the first vowel in *scribendi* for another, and then we have the name of your Saturday fever.' 'I don't understand you, William,' said the wife, shaking a scrubbing-brush at her spouse.

K. Q.

Anecdote of Prior.

MATTHEW PRIOR, the poet, held the appointment of ambassador at the Court of Versailles. Johnson relates that as the poet was one day surveying the apartments at Versailles, being shown the victories of Louis painted by Le

Brun, and asked whether the King of England's palace had any such decorations, 'The monuments of my master's actions,' said he, 'are to be seen everywhere but in his own house.'

The British Public.

THE late Mr. Bartley, when explaining to Planché how an English audience was to be roused, said, 'You must first tell them you are going to do so-and-so;

you must then tell them you are doing it; then that you have done it; and then, by G—, *perhaps* they will understand you!'

HE that cannot forgive others, breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself; for every man has need to be forgiven.—LORD HERBERT.

Variorum.

TWISS, in his *Life of Lord Eldon*, relates a story of Lord Erskine, which must delight all tender hearts. A ruffianly driver, in the neighbourhood of Hampstead Heath, was punishing a miserable bare-boned hack-horse. Lord Erskine's sympathy provoked him to a smart remonstrance. 'Why,' said the fellow, 'it's my own; mayn't I use it as I please?' And as he spoke he discharged a fresh shower of blows on the raw back of the beast. Lord Erskine, excessively irritated, laid his walking-stick sharply over the shoulders of the offender, who, crouching and grumbling, asked him what business he had to touch him with his stick. 'Why,' replied Erskine, to whom the opportunity of a joke was irresistible, 'it's my own; mayn't I use it as I please?'

Charles Lamb was once asked why the compartments in the Long Room of the East India House, with six clerks (Lamb being one) in each, were called compounds. 'What is the meaning of the word?' Lamb dryly answered, 'A collection of simples!'

'Sir,' said Dr. Johnson, on one occasion, 'it is a shame to speak ill of a man behind his back; but I think the gentleman who has just left the room is—an attorney!'

At a Philadelphia election a voter was challenged for not being naturalised. 'A pretty objection to a true Yankee!' he replied; 'but are you naturalised yourself?' 'Yes, sir.' 'Well, you are not civilised by a considerable majority, I reckon.'

A French lady wrote the following laconic epistle to her husband: 'Je vous écris parceque je n'ai rien à faire; je finis parceque je n'ai rien à dire. A Paris.'

My friend Popple has a ready wit. I was playing chess with him once, when, strange to say, we found that a knight was missing. A lump of sugar supplied the deficiency, which drew from the poetic youth a reference to the '*dulcissima noctis imago*' of Ennius. When Popple was a mere boy he was walking along the street on Sunday afternoon with a pipe in his mouth. A well-meaning missionary called out to him from the other pavement, 'Young man, you are going fast to hell!' '*Au revoir*, then!' said Popple, with a pleasant wave of the hand. L. S.

A story is told of the late Dr. Andrew Thomson that, when he was a student, he came to his father one day in great glee to announce the death of the gravedigger. On being rebuked for his levity, he said, by way of justification, 'You see, father, you are the minister and Will [his brother] is the dominie, and if I could get on to succeed the gravedigger, we would hae it a' among us.'

Charles James Fox, on one of his occasions for borrowing money, met with a good-natured Jew, who told him he might take his own time for paying it back. 'Then,' said Charles, 'we'll make it the Day of Judgment, or, as that will be rather a busy day, suppose we say the day after.'

THE force of habit is exemplified in the following : Wilkie had a singularly drawling way of pronouncing the word 'really,' and also a habit of perpetually introducing it. On one occasion a friend, Calcott, thus addressed him : 'Do you know, Wilkie, that every one complains of your continual rea-al-ly ?' Wilkie mused a moment, looked at Calcott, and then drawled out, 'Do they re-al-ly ?' 'For Heaven's sake, don't keep repeating it,' said Calcott ; 'it annoys me !' Wilkie looked, smiled, and, in the most unconscious manner, said, 'Re-al-ly !'

Queen Elizabeth, seeing Sir Edward — in her garden, looked out of her window, and asked him, in Italian, what a man thought of when he thought of nothing. Sir Edward paused a little, and said, 'Madam, he thinks of a woman's promise.' The Queen shrank in her head, and was heard to say, 'Edward, I must not confute you. Anger makes dull men witty, but it keeps them poor.'

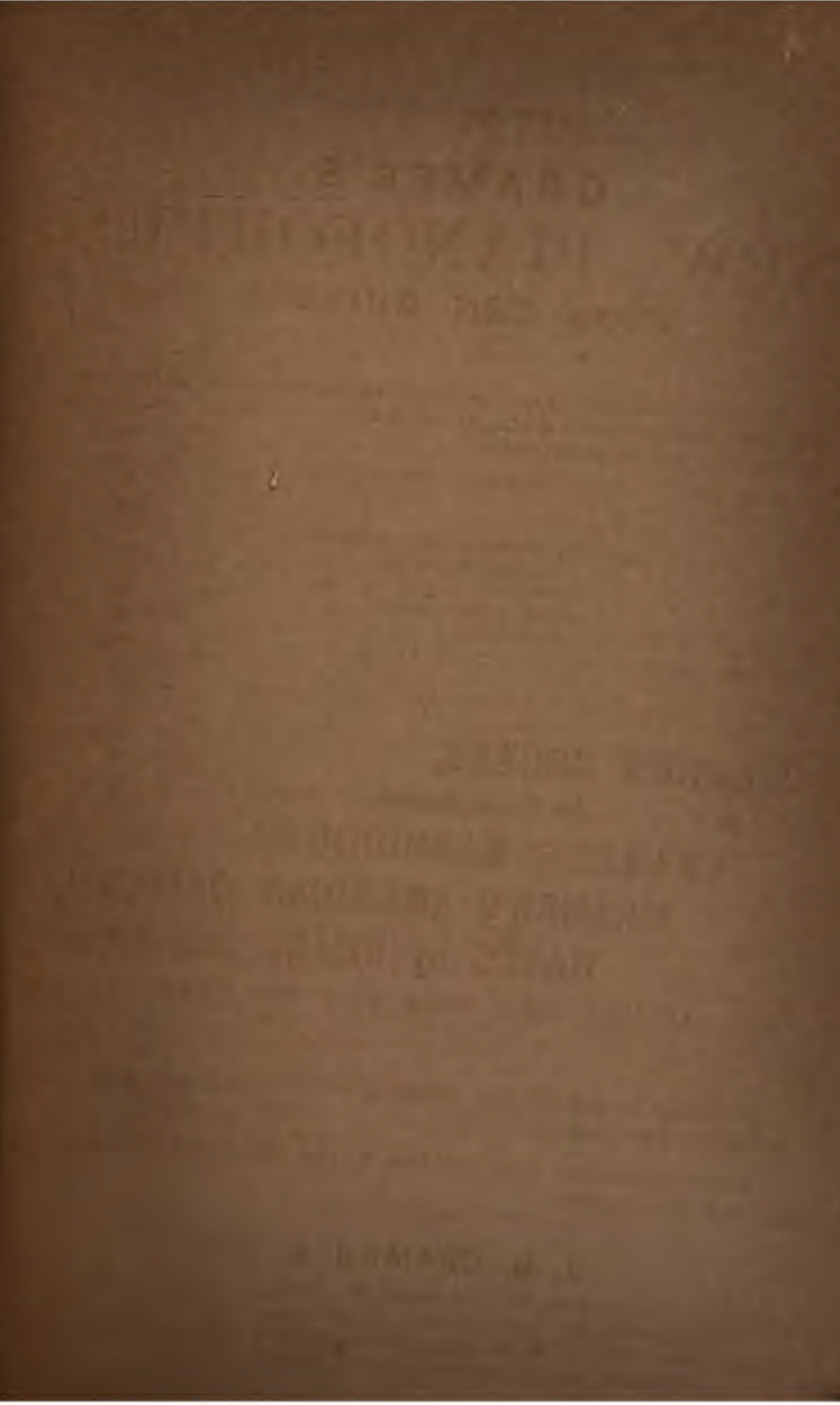
Turner, the painter, was a ready wit. Once at a dinner of artists and literary men a minor poet, by way of being facetious, proposed as a toast, 'The health of the painters and glaziers of Great Britain.' The toast was drunk, and Turner, after returning thanks for it, proposed 'The health of the British paper-stainers.' The laugh was loud against the poet.

In a case that was being heard before Sir George Rose, it appeared that a picture of 'Elijah fed by Ravens' had been given as part of some security. Sir George handed down a note to one of the counsel in the case : 'This is, so far as I am aware, the first instance on record of an *accommodation bill*.'

Thackeray was not a humorist in the sense that Dickens was, nor a wit in the sense that Jerrold was, but he now and then said a good thing in a quiet way. He was pestered on one occasion, while in America, by a young gentleman of an inquiring turn of mind as to what was thought of this person and that person in England. 'Mr. Thackeray,' he asked, 'what do they think of Tupper ?' 'They don't think of Tupper,' was the reply.

We are very much of the opinion of Charles Dickens after attending a *séance*. Having requested the attendance of the spirit of Lindley Murray, he was informed that the spectre awaited his questioning. 'Are you the spirit of Lindley Murray ?' asked the great author. 'I am,' replied the incorporeal visitor. Mr. Dickens was immediately convinced. So are we.

'We here in England received a very high character of Lord — during his stay abroad.' 'Not unlikely, sir,' replied the traveller : 'a dead dog at a distance is said to smell like musk.'—*Coleridge's Literary Remains*.





JANE WELSH CARLYLE.

Born, July 14, 1801; died, April 21, 1866.

See the Editor's Note in
'ANECDOTE CORNER.'



LONDON SOCIETY.

MAY 1883.

TWO DAYS AT THE SEASIDE.

A True Story.

My husband, whom I will call Mr. Rose, had the misfortune to be employed in a certain anomalous branch of the English Government Service, called the Malay Native States Service.

We did not think it a misfortune when he first obtained an entry into the service — on the contrary, we were much pleased; but that was only from ignorance of what awaited us.

The first station to which we were sent was bad enough: the second, of which I am going to speak, was worse. It was at Durian Sabatang, a wretched Chinese village, built on a flat mud-swamp, about forty miles up the Perak river.

Our first sight of Durian Sabatang filled us with dismay. The Residency, or Government bungalow, in which we were expected to live, was an ancient shed made of palm-leaves, propped up on about fifty tottering legs made of the stems of palms. The shed was in so dilapidated a condition that no respectable English farmer would have put a respectable English cow into it. There was a ladder at the back and another at the front, by which the shed could be entered.

The so-called 'garden' attached to this charming abode consisted of a straight flat strip of flower-

border on each side of a straight flat strip of road, about fifty yards in length, which led up to the house. These borders were planted with what were meant to be flowering shrubs, which, not being protected by any fence, were nibbled to mere stumps by stray goats. There was, however, a bit of swampy turf at the back of the residential shed, on which we eventually managed to play lawn-tennis under difficulties.

On entering the shed we were at once struck by the numerous gaps in the thatch. A storm of rain generally occurs once in every twenty-four hours in the Straits Settlements, consequently it was not long before we had an opportunity of experiencing all the discomforts attendant on a leaky roof. There appeared to be about twelve permanent leaks; but, besides these, every now and then the wind would lift up a large piece of thatch bodily, while the rain poured down as if from buckets through the temporary openings thus made. There were no ceilings to the rooms; the bedrooms were only formed by palm-leaf fences about eight feet high, something like the 'wattles' used in Kent for enclosing sheep. The skeleton framework of poles, on which the thatch rested, was not veiled or disguised in any way.

High up on these poles where they converged, among cobwebs so black and solid from age that they looked like pieces of cloth waving in the wind, sat rats of all sizes, eating, playing, and enjoying themselves thoroughly. I think they were the only beings that did enjoy themselves thoroughly in Durian Sabatang. The cat gazed fiercely at them with glittering eyes from below; but not being gifted, like a sloth, with the power of hanging by her claws from the under side of a pole, she could not reach them. At first we used to amuse ourselves by throwing all sorts of missiles at the rats; but we never hit them, and only further damaged the frail roof, so we had to give that up.

The use of the shed's fifty legs soon became apparent. The first morning after our arrival, on looking out of the window-hole (windows there are none, of course, in so hot a climate), I saw the whole country was under water, and one of my poor hens, which I had brought with me from a former station, was floating past the house on the flood with all her new-born chickens. This flood was the result of a high tide from the sea, from which Durian Sabatang is not very distant as the crow flies. We had many such floods during my stay in this delectable swamp. The Kling gardener delighted in them, as they gave him an unfailing excuse for doing nothing. When asked why there were neither flowers nor vegetables in the garden, he always laid the blame on the floods.

It was, however, vexatious not to be able to grow vegetables at home, as none fit to eat were to be had in the squalid Chinese shops. As for fresh beef or mutton, that was, of course, quite

hopeless. Such a thing as a cow or a sheep had never been seen in Durian Sabatang. It would have cost a great deal more than our pay to have imported cows and sheep, and to have kept cow-herds and shepherds to look after them, not to speak of the inevitable loss of the animals by death from sea-sickness or by the thieveries of the very men employed to guard them. We lived, therefore, almost entirely on tinned meats, which were always much damaged by the climate before they reached us. We got so sick of them at last that often we let them go away from the table untouched, and preferred to starve. These tins had, most probably, been for many months in the Singapore shops, and a month in the tropics is more damaging than a year at home. A Singapore shopkeeper, unless he is greatly belied, looks on an order from a 'junglewallah' as a Heaven-sent opportunity of getting rid of his unsaleable goods. He knows that the freight to the jungle is so heavy that the wretched victim will think twice before sending anything back.

Whene'er we took our walk abroad—for there was only one road in Durian Sabatang, and that only half a mile in length—we saw many hideous, nine-tenths-naked Chinese coolies, almost all with repulsive skin-diseases, and all, without exception, owning the most villainous countenances; they scowled at us with hebeted looks, being opium-eaters to a man. Probably they could not see—as, indeed, I never could myself—what business we English had there at all; however, they, at any rate, had no right to complain, for they were as much intruders as ourselves, the Malays, or rather the Sakeis, being the aborigines.

A large proportion of the

Chinese population was generally in prison for some crime or other, and gangs of them might be seen walking about with chains on their legs, each gang under the charge of a small Malay policeman with a loaded gun. These convicts were generally considered by the English and the Malays to be the flower of the Chinese community, the argument being that all Chinese are scoundrels deserving of prison, and that those who elude prison are merely more practised scoundrels than the rest. Thus the convicts were much run after as washermen, tailors, and caretakers; and on one occasion, the superintendent of police, being obliged to leave suddenly, put his house and all its contents under the charge of his pet convict as being one of the few comparatively honest men in the place. The consequence was that this convict might be seen any day in the superintendent's verandah, lounging comfortably in a long chair, with his legs, iron chains and all, stuck up on the table, and a cigarette in his mouth. I believe, however, that the superintendent had no reason to regret his choice of a caretaker.

Some of the convicts were told off to do housework in the houses of the three Europeans every day; that is, they had to carry all the water required for baths, cooking purposes, &c. I used to watch the process from the window. The first thing the convicts did on reaching the river, which ran past the garden, was to wash themselves all over, clothes—what little they had—and all; there were sometimes thirty or more in the gang; and as soon as half of them had done they filled their pails at the same spot, while their comrades were still bathing, and brought us our drinking water for the day. I was much disgusted

at this, and was on the point of sending out a message to them that I should be obliged if they would fetch our water first, and bathe themselves afterwards; but my husband pointed out to me that a few coolies more or less bathing there did not signify, since the whole population of the village not only bathed, but threw every sort of refuse into the river a few yards further up.

The housework was always looked on by the convicts as specially degrading, therefore the worst criminals were chosen for it; and I had an opportunity every day, when walking in the garden, of reading their term of imprisonment marked on their clothes, and of knowing myself to be surrounded by murderers and villains of the deepest dye. This was rather interesting than otherwise.

For society we had a fluctuating company of three at the most, all British. There was, I need scarcely say, no doctor among them. If any one of the three fell ill and wished for medical advice, he had to send a boat up the river to ask leave of the Resident to go to Penang. The boat took about five days to go up the river, as it was against the stream, and about three to come back; so even in case of the Resident's happening to be at home, and replying at once, there must still be eight days' delay at the very least before the invalid could get permission to go to Penang, and after that, possibly a whole fortnight might intervene before the steamer could arrive to take him. The diseases most common to Englishmen in the tropics are fever, cholera, and sunstroke, any one of which may carry off a strong man in a few hours; but in this Government service it was looked upon as a crime for any officer,

even though feeling himself at the point of death, to leave his post without the proper official eight days of delay. The theory in high official circles was that 'an officer worth anything would always rather die at his post than leave it without permission.' The high officials who uttered this noble sentiment doubtless forgot that, although their own posts might possibly be worth dying for, it is a little unreasonable to expect the same amount of enthusiasm from a man whose pay is hardly sufficient to keep him, and whose chief occupation is to digest the snubs which they delight to administer to all those below them on the official ladder.

As there was no doctor within reach, so also was there no Christian church in Durian Sabatang. The nearest church was at Penang, which was practically as far off as if it had been at Timbuctoo.

A trading steamer used to come once a fortnight, except when she broke down or went into dock. One or other of these misfortunes happened pretty frequently; and O, the straining of the eyes down the river on the days when the steamer was expected, and the heartsick disappointment when she did not come; or, on the other hand, the wild tumult of delight when her whistle, faint and far off, but still unmistakable, was heard! It was not surprising that we felt so much excitement about her coming, as the whole of our comfort for a month depended on that single uncertain thread; she had a horrid way of going into dock without giving us poor dwellers in jungles the slightest warning, and when that was the case, we were literally half-starved until she came out again. It is impossible in the tropics to keep a large stock of eatables and drinkables, as everything goes bad

with the most frightful rapidity. The resources of Durian Sabatang itself, in the way of food, consisted of skinny fowls that had gained their livelihood by acting as scavengers in the streets; of river-fish, with a strong muddy flavour; and occasionally, as a great treat, of a piece of fresh pork, 'butchered to make a' Chinese 'holiday.'

Besides stores, the steamer brought us letters and newspapers, and was our only means of communication with the outside world. The rest of the fortnight, when we had devoured our newspapers, was weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable, our lives being a burden to us through heat, ennui, and mosquitoes, of which last, of course, there were millions.

After we had vegetated in this miserable place for some months, we were electrified one night by hearing the whistle of a steamer. Who *could* it be? Mr. Rose looked out, saw the fiery eye of a small steam-launch gleaming in the blackness of the river, and went to meet the new arrival. It proved to be a young Englishman, slightly known to us, who had a thrilling tale to tell. The Chinese coolies at Lumut, to the number of many hundreds, were in open mutiny, he said, against the English, and he himself had fled for his life by night. Lumut, it should be mentioned, was a sugar estate at some distance, the owner of which had lately become bankrupt. Mr. Rose felt at first inclined to pooh-pooh the danger, though he thought it quite probable the coolies were justly irritated at not having their wages paid. He, however, started with the young Englishman next morning for Lumut, taking with him a few Sikh police under a legalised ruffian of the name of Subadar Deen Mahomed, much valued by

the Government officials on account of his 'strength of character,' *i.e.* his utter unscrupulousness as to the means which he employed for the attainment of their desires.

When Mr. Rose arrived at Lumut he found there was a good deal of truth in the young Englishman's report. The Chinese, though they could hardly as yet be called in open mutiny, were evidently ripe for it; in fact, in the very first words which Mr. Rose exchanged with their headman, the latter openly threatened his—the magistrate's—life, and that of all the Englishmen in the State. The words were hardly out of his mouth when the audacious Chinaman measured his length on the floor, Deen Mahomed having with the speed of lightning twisted his hand into the man's pigtail and laid him low, without waiting for orders. Mr. Rose could hardly forbear a smile at the neat way in which it was done; but, after allowing the man to lie there for a minute or two as a lesson, he desired Deen Mahomed to let him get up, and then addressed the coolies through him as interpreter. He told them that he could not allow them to remain at Lumut, as the estate being bankrupt there was no longer work for them there; but that he would give them all a free passage, with food, to Penang, and would report their case to the authorities in Penang, who, he had no doubt, would soon find them suitable employment and wages. The men appeared satisfied with this programme, translated for them into Chinese by the headman, whose pigtail was still in the grasp of Deen Mahomed, and whose manners were consequently wonderfully softened and improved. Mr. Rose saw the coolies all off by the next steamer, paying another visit to Lumut

for the purpose; and it was hoped that the whole affair had blown over, a hope not destined to be realised.

On his way back from Lumut, Mr. Rose called, in his magisterial capacity, on the superintendent of the neighbouring island of Pangkor. Happening to mention that I was very unwell—a not surprising result of the discomforts of Durian Sabatang—the superintendent and his wife kindly suggested that a visit of two or three days to them at the seaside might benefit me. I had never seen either of them, but that was of no consequence in a country where English are so rare that all are to a certain extent brothers. So on receiving a note from Mrs. L., I accepted the invitation without scruple, and a few days more saw me on board a steam-launch on my way to Pangkor. Mr. Rose was, of course, unable to accompany me, as he was tied to his office work in Durian Sabatang.

When I arrived at the L's, the first thing they told me was that all their men-servants had absconded the day before, immediately after receiving their wages. I was not much surprised at this, as I had often heard of such things happening to other people. We ourselves had never had any experience of the kind, but we attributed this to our having brought two trustworthy servants with us from Sarawak, where the servants are, as a rule, far better than those to be had in the Malay peninsula. In fact, the latter are always said to be the refuse of China; and those who take situations in isolated jungles are the refuse of that refuse—men who have made the towns too hot to hold them, and are glad to be in hiding for a time. I felt very sorry for my hostess, who did not look strong,

and had three small children, the youngest only six months old. She had been obliged to get in some Kling servants from the village at a moment's notice—one to act as house-boy, the other as under-nurse—but they appeared to be ignorant savages. There was also a Chinese ayah, of whom more anon.

I had luckily brought with me an old Chinaman called Apat as my attendant. He went by the nickname of the 'Faithful,' because a sort of canine fidelity appeared to be his strongest characteristic. As soon as he discovered the state of affairs, he both cooked the dinner and waited on us at table, also doing what he could to help in the housework.

Next day we went for a walk on the island, ending with a call on the Penghulu or Malay headman of the district. Our reception was not particularly cordial, and on our way home I was told the cause of this. Mrs. L. had been ill, and the Penghulu's womenkind had come to call on her and inquire after her health. They thought it due to themselves, Malay fashion, to come in a troop of thirty, tailing off into a rabble of dirty unclad little slave boys and girls; they forced their way into her bedroom, where she was lying down with a bad headache, and, intrusive and obtuse like all Malay women, began to ask foolish and impertinent questions, to touch Mrs. L.'s face and dress with their dirty hands, and to beg for everything they saw, which, in their code of manners, is considered a delicate compliment to the owner. They did not mean any harm; on the contrary, they doubtless thought they were showing themselves extremely kind and neighbourly; but the not unnatural result of their attentions was that on Captain L.'s coming in, Mrs. L. begged him to send

them away, and he cleared the room without ceremony. The women went home and complained to the Penghulu that the superintendent had been uncivil, no doubt greatly exaggerating his actions; and since that day the Penghulu and he had been barely on speaking terms.

On the following day (Thursday) we paid a visit to the deserted sugar estate of Lumut, which was on the mainland close by. Here we visited the hut of the Eurasian superintendent, who was remaining there almost alone until all the affairs of the estate should be wound up. He evidently wished to make himself extremely agreeable, and busied himself in preparing tea for us. As we steamed back in the launch to Pangkor, I asked Captain L. how it was that this man, who was doubtless looked on as a white man by the Chinese coolies, had been able to stay on in no danger from them, although the two other white men on the estate had both fled. He replied that this man was believed to belong to the same Chinese Hoey, or secret society, as the coolies. I afterwards found that this was the case, and that at the very time that this wretch was giving us tea, and affecting to be so anxious for our comfort, he must have been acquainted with all the plans of the Hoey, and must have known that in a few hours we should in all probability be murdered; yet he never gave us the least hint of it. True, had he done so, and had it become known to the Hoey that he had done so, his own life might have been in danger; but if he had chosen, he might quite easily have warned us without any Chinaman's being the wiser.

The evening passed without anything eventful occurring, and as the mosquitoes were madden-

ing, we separated for the night soon after nine.

I had been asleep some two hours, perhaps, when I was suddenly awakened by a great shouting and a great light overhead. The house was, like ours at Durian Sabatang, subdivided by partitions only of about eight feet in height, so that a light in any one room lit up the whole roof, which was visible from all parts of the house. Besides the shouting and the glare, I heard several shots fired. 'A Chinese festival, no doubt,' thought I; and I felt no alarm, but only surprise that Captain L. should allow Chinese to come into his house making such a disturbance at midnight. After the noise had gone on for a few seconds, I began to think it strange that I did not hear Captain L.'s voice, and then to think that the sounds were almost too loud and confused even for a Chinese feast. I did not feel inclined to go out of my room, as my dress was hardly the thing for a mixed company, but compromised matters by jumping on a small table that stood near, and peeping over the wall. Then I saw a sight which at once convinced me that all was not right. In the doorway opposite me, which I knew was that of Mrs. L.'s room, were two Chinamen dashing open a box with hatchets. Yet I was far from guessing what was the fact—namely, that my host had been murdered a few minutes before, and that he and his wife were now lying, weltering in their blood, just inside that doorway! I cried out loudly, 'Captain L.! Mrs. L.! what is all this? what is the matter?' There was of course no answer; but one of the Chinamen looked up, saw me, and, with his hatchet still in his hand, made for the door of my bedroom. I dashed down and held the door in

the insane hope of keeping him out; but, alas! it was only made, like the rest of the house, of palm-leaves lashed together with rattan, and in another moment the Chinaman had forced it open, and stood before me. Even then I did not understand that he intended to murder me. I was ignorant of the tragedy that had just taken place, and it never occurred to me as possible that the L.'s were not alive and well somewhere about the house. The Chinaman marched gravely and stolidly into the middle of the room, I retreating before him, and saying in Malay, 'What are you doing here? what do you want? Get out!' He made no answer, but held the hatchet up in front of him, grasping the handle with both hands, and, without the smallest change of expression in his countenance, made cuts, as I then thought ineffectually, at my head. I raised my hand to parry the blows, and, as I felt absolutely no pain, fancied I had succeeded; but I must have fallen down insensible, as I remember nothing more. The doctor, on afterwards examining my head, found three trifling cuts and one severe one upon it, the latter about four inches long and tolerably deep.

It may seem stupid of me to have been so long in taking in the idea that I was going to be murdered, but I must plead in excuse that the demeanour of my friend the Chinaman was calculated to mislead me as to his intentions. The ideal murderer of history and fiction is, as we know, a being full of fire and fury, rushing upon his victim with a glance so deadly that it tells its own tale, and at once carries conviction even to the dullest intellect. But this man was calm, composed, phlegmatic; he advanced without the smallest emotion or flurry,

and appeared, in fact, exactly as if he were going about his ordinary business. The secret of this may be that he *was* employed in his usual business; for he proved to be one of a gang that made robbery and murder their nightly occupation in Province Wellesley.

I do not know how long I lay unconscious, but my next recollection is of being waked by the sound of many excited Malay voices in the room. On first coming to myself I was by no means clear in my head or memory, and tried in vain to recollect where I was and what had happened. What helped to bewilder me was that I found myself lying on the floor under a bed, among boxes and lumber that were all strange to me. I listened eagerly to the noise going on in the room, but as about twenty Malays were all talking at once, even a better Malay scholar than myself might have been puzzled. I gathered, however, from a stray sentence, that Captain L. was dead. This filled me with horror, which increased when I heard them talking about a Chinaman who was dead, and when I listened in vain for the voices of Mrs. L. or the children. The silence of the latter seemed indeed ominous, as during my short acquaintance with them I had never before known them to be all quiet simultaneously. The poor little things had kept up a constant wailing night and day, from not being accustomed to their new nurse; so that now, when there was so much additional cause for their crying, their silence seemed most unnatural. I would have given a great deal at that moment to have heard again the pitiful wailing that had kept me awake on the first night of my arrival.

Presently I heard one of the Malays inquiring after me, and

another replied, in a cheerful voice,

'Doubtless she is dead, and her body thrown into the sea.'

This did not seem to convince the questioner, who called out,

'Mem Perak! mem Perak! where are you? Do not fear; we are your friends. Come out!'

I felt so sure by this time that I was the only survivor from a general massacre of the English and their followers—for I had made up my mind that the dead Chinaman of whom they spoke was Apat, my servant—that I resisted without difficulty this polite invitation to come and be murdered, as I considered it. In fact, the more the Malays called me, the less inclined I felt to come; and when one of them presently lifted up the draperies of the bed and peered under it, I held my breath and lay as still as possible. He did not see me, as there was very little light, and the boxes concealed me.

The Malays continued to chatter, and I to listen. I heard one of them giving orders, and others deferentially replying, 'Yes, sir, certainly, Tuan Penghulu.' I immediately jumped to the conclusion, from what I had known of the quarrel between Captain L. and the Penghulu, that the latter had planned the murder; and I wondered if I were the humble instrument destined by Providence to be the means of hanging the Penghulu as high as Haman. In the mean time it seemed extremely doubtful whether I could remain undiscovered where I was until help should arrive, and I began to think of all the stories I had heard of Malays on the war-path, and to wonder if, like other savages, they were in the habit of torturing their victims before putting them to death. In the midst

of these speculations, which had just then a painful and personal interest for me, I suddenly heard the Penghulu dictating a letter apparently to Mr. Rose, urging him to come at once and to bring plenty of police. This produced quite a revolution in my opinions; it was incompatible with my theory that the Penghulu was a murderous rebel, as the police in question were Sikhs and Pathans under the notorious Deen Mahomed; in short, they were formidable fellows, and the very last men whom a rebellious Malay would wish to meet. My doubts of the Penghulu were further dispelled by my hearing the well known nasal drawl of my servant Apat, who came in saying he had hunted everywhere for me, and could not find me. This determined me to come out and show myself, and I did so. I must confess that the moment of my emerging from my retreat was an exciting one, for I could not really tell for certain whether I had heard aright—whether, in fact, I should be welcomed or murdered. But I was not long left in doubt. After a general exclamation of 'Wah!' from everybody, they rushed up to me, Apat foremost. In delight at seeing me again, he seized both my hands, grinning from ear to ear, and expressing his joy at my being alive. I then had to tell the assembled company all that I knew of my own adventures, which was, of course, very little; and they in return took up the tale from where I left off. They told me that, in the middle of the night, they had heard shots at the Residency, and had looked out and seen a great blaze of light in the direction of the house. They immediately armed themselves, and came to find out what was going on, arriving in time to see a quantity of boats full of Chinamen

putting off from the shore. As they had no means at hand of pursuing them, they went into the house, where they found Captain L. dead, Mrs. L. apparently dying, the furniture all wrecked, and the bedclothes and other draperies just bursting into flames; the Chinese having set fire to them with torches, no doubt in hopes of obliterating all traces of their crime. The Malays extinguished the flames, and did what they could for the dead and the dying. The Penghulu was on the point of sending off a report of the affair to Mr. Rose, mentioning, among other items, that I was missing, when I appeared. This story tallied so perfectly with all that I had heard whilst lying *perdu* that I saw no reason to doubt it. The Penghulu then showed me Captain L.'s body, which was on the floor, reverently covered with a sheet, and the seemingly lifeless form of Mrs. L. on the very bed from under which I had just come out. Her eyes were closed, and her face deathly pale, except where it was covered with blood, or black from the bruises of the hammers with which the fiendish ruffians had not scrupled to strike her. Intensely shocked at this sight, I asked the Penghulu whether he thought she was alive. He said yes, but that he did not think she could possibly recover; in proof of which he pointed to a wash-hand basin half-full of blood which she had vomited, showing, as he thought, that she had received some frightful internal injury. I suggested that 'while there was life there was hope,' and that we ought to do all we could to get her English medical assistance; and, after discussing what was possible to be done, it was proposed that I should go in the steam-launch, which was just about to set off

for Durian Sabatang, and fetch with all speed the trading steamer, now probably somewhere on the Perak river. I felt some doubt as to whether I had not better remain with Mrs. L., in case of her becoming conscious; but the Penghulu assured me that, from his experience of such cases, she would certainly not recover consciousness for hours, perhaps not for days; and that I might safely leave her in the charge of her Chinese ayah and of his own wife (who sat beside the bed fanning her), and be back again with the steamer before she could awake. Accordingly this was settled, and as the steam-launch was not yet quite ready, the Penghulu sat down to finish his letter; while I went to make some alterations in my dress. First, however, I inquired after the children, and, to my amazement, was told they were alive and unharmed. I walked into the nursery to see them for myself, and there they were, all placidly asleep in their little cribs. How they had contrived to sleep through all the disturbances was wonderful, unless, as was afterwards suggested, they had been drugged by the Chinese ayah.

The Malays now brought me a looking-glass to show me what my own appearance was like, and truly I was a ghastly object. My face, my hair, and my clothes were covered with not merely stains, but masses of clotted blood. I could not attempt to alter this, as I did not wish to keep the steam-launch waiting; so I merely added a hat and a long cloak to the clothes that I already wore, and started.

Once on board I had plenty of time, and tried to wash the blood from my face; but the skin was bruised and painful to the touch, and I desisted, under the impres-

sion that my face was cloven in half by a sword-cut—a mistaken impression, as it turned out, for I had no wounds except those on the top of my head. I now took the opportunity of asking Apat 'the Faithful' where he had been during the attack. He hung his head, and replied that he had run away. I asked, had it never occurred to him to try to help me? He protested that at the very first sight of the robbers he was running to warn me, when he was wounded in the leg—here he showed an infinitesimal scratch on his ankle—and that then he ran away; but after getting into the jungle he turned back, intending to look for me, when the Chinese ayah, who wanted him to help her up a steep bank, assured him that she had seen me escape, and that I was a little way on in front.

I think it occurred to Apat that his conduct had not been particularly heroic; but I could not but recollect that one of his first acts on finding me to be alive had been to put into my hands my dressing-bag, which he knew contained dollars. Any other Chinese servant would certainly have kept that bag to himself, and said nothing about it; so, comparatively, Apat was still entitled to his distinctive appellation of 'the Faithful.'

The steam-launch was much longer in meeting the steamer than I had expected; but at last the welcome sight of her masts appeared, and I stopped her and told my story. I then sent on the steam-launch to Durian Sabatang, with Apat bearing a verbal message to Mr. Rose that he was not to be alarmed, as I felt quite well. This message Apat never delivered, but appeared before Mr. Rose with tears streaming down his face, and in such a state

of fright at having to deliver bad news, that Mr. Rose could get hardly any news out of him at all. The Penghulu's letter was not much better, being like all Malay letters full of complimentary nothings, with the one piece of information crammed into half a line and placed in the middle of the letter, where it was as difficult to find as the proverbial needle in a haystack.

On our return to Pangkor, a coffin was hastily made for the body of Captain L., and it was carried on board to be taken to Penang. Mrs. L., still unconscious, and the children were also carried on board. I wished to remain behind to meet my husband, but was told that for several reasons it was advisable that I should also come to Penang: first, my testimony would be wanted at the inquest; secondly, my own wounds required medical attention; and thirdly, I might be of use in attending Mrs. L., as there was no European woman on board. To these representations I yielded, and, leaving a note to be delivered to Mr. Rose on his arrival, I went on board.

We arrived at Penang at day-break on Sunday. Our arrival caused, as may be supposed, a considerable sensation. Crowds of natives swarmed on to the wharf. The English authorities of Penang were soon in attendance, and an inquest was held on board; after which a discussion took place as to what was to be done with the survivors. The then Lieutenant-Governor of Penang and his wife, with their usual hospitality and warm-heartedness, wished to take in the whole party—children, ayahs, and all; but this was overruled by the doctor, who decided that Mrs. L. was too ill to be moved so far, the Lieutenant-Governor's house being

several miles off. So it ended in Mrs. L. and the children being taken in by a friend close at hand; while I went to the Lieutenant-Governor's house, where everything was done for me that could possibly be done in the way of kindness and attention. Before I left the steamer the doctor insisted on my having part of my head shaved. I have no doubt he was right; but the shaving, while the wounds were still fresh, hurt me terribly, whereas up to that moment I had felt no pain or discomfort from them.

I had barely arrived at the Lieutenant-Governor's house when Mr. Rose arrived from Durian Sabatang. He had received the most garbled account of the affair—first from Apat, and then from the Penghulu at Pangkor, where he stopped for a few minutes on the way. He had had a most dangerous voyage himself, having come in a little steam-launch which was only fit for river use, and having encountered an awful storm at sea. As soon as he had satisfied himself that I was neither dead nor dying, he went to interview the Lieutenant-Governor, who warned him that he would get into dire disgrace with his chief for having left his post without permission, as the excuse of a half-murdered wife was not admissible in official circles; and directed him to return at once to the scene of the murder, whither police, men-of-war, and all manner of defences were now being sent in hot haste, to 'lock the stable-door,' and to capture the murderers if possible.

Investigations were meanwhile made in Penang, which resulted in the discovery that the murder had been done by a gang of Chinamen, composed partly of the ex-coolies of Lumut and partly of professional gang-robbers, who had

hired a junk, and been seen to start in the direction of Pangkor some days previously. It further came out that these coolies, indignant at being summarily disbanded from Lumut, and at not being at once provided with work by the Penang Government, had taken it into their foolish heads that Captain L. was in some way to blame for their misfortunes, and that he was keeping back the money which ought to have been paid them in wages. Just at that juncture arrived the three Chinese servants who had absconded from Captain L.'s the day before my unlucky visit. They acted upon the discontented coolies like a spark upon gunpowder. The servants fancied they had themselves some grievance against Captain L., particularly the cook, who on one occasion had so far forgotten himself as to fling a plate at his master's head; and they easily persuaded the coolies that they would be only doing what was just and fair if they organised an expedition to recover their lawful wages, which, the servants declared, were kept by Captain L., to the extent of seven thousand dollars, in a safe in his bedroom. It is scarcely necessary to say that the money so kept was not really the wages of the Lumut coolies; it was Government revenue, collected by Captain L., and kept in the safe until the proper day of forwarding it should arrive. However, the coolies swallowed the tale greedily, took some professional gang-robbers and the three servants with them, and carried out the expedition as we have seen. They found only one thousand dollars in the safe, instead of the reported seven thousand; but they partly consoled themselves by carrying off all the watches, bracelets, and other valuables in the house. It was be-

lieved that at least sixty Chinamen had taken part in the affair.

While these facts were oozing out in Penang, Mr. Rose and Deen Mahomed had not been idle. They obtained information from the Penang police which led to the arrest on suspicion of about forty Chinamen, most of whom unfortunately were afterwards let off for want of sufficient evidence, though there were proofs clear to every European mind of their guilt. One ringleader was captured by Deen Mahomed, with his usual ability. It was Tan Ah Teck, the ex-headman at Lumut, the same who had threatened Mr. Rose's life, and had been thereupon floored by Deen Mahomed. The latter now heard that this man might possibly be found after dark at a certain wood-cutter's hut. An expedition was therefore arranged under Mr. Rose, and he, Deen Mahomed, and about ten Sikh policemen started for the hut. The night was most inclement; in fact, next morning it was found that no less than eight inches of rain had fallen within twelve hours—a thing quite unprecedented even in that climate. However, Mr. Rose and Deen Mahomed agreed that the worse the weather the better for their purpose, as they were more likely to find Mr. Tan Ah Teck at home. But in this they were disappointed. They found several coolies in the hut; but Tan Ah Teck was not there, and the coolies denied all knowledge of him. Nevertheless, Deen Mahomed suspected, from their manner, that he was not far off, and laid his plans accordingly. He took Mr. Rose aside, and confided to him his impression, adding that in such weather Tan Ah Teck would be sure to come back soon, if he could be deceived into thinking that the police were

gone. He therefore proposed that Mr. Rose and all the policemen except two should return to the steam-launch, taking with them all the coolies, and making as much noise as possible on the way. He, Deen Mahomed, would remain behind, lying in wait with the two policemen for the return of Tan Ah Teck. All fell out exactly as he had foreseen. The voices of the retreating party had hardly died away in the distance when a Chinaman stole up in the darkness, scratched gently at the palm-leaf shutter, and called softly in Chinese to know if the coast was clear, no doubt believing some of his comrades to be inside. Deen Mahomed darted forward, pinioned his arms, and dragged him to the light, when he easily recognised Tan Ah Teck, and, after securing him, fired the two shots agreed upon between him and Mr. Rose as the signal of success. At the assizes, Tan Ah Teck was convicted, and sentenced to penal servitude for life. He died in prison some time afterwards, and it is satisfactory to know that when dying he voluntarily confessed his guilt to the Superintendent of Prisons in Singapore.

After three weeks, when the country was again quiet, and the English in Penang had ceased to look shudderingly under their beds at night for Chinese robbers, I returned to Durian Sabatang. I was twice summoned from thence to go to Penang as a witness, and obeyed the first time; but as the hot voyage was very trying to my health, and my testimony was not in the least important, I ventured to disobey the second summons. In truth I was so ill that my husband had determined to send me to Europe, and only waited to see if I should be wanted at the assizes before

taking my passage. It turned out that I was not wanted at the assizes, of which I was glad on the whole; but, at the same time, I was sorry not to see and hear the end of an affair in which I took a deep interest. I never rightly heard all the details of the trial, but I believe that only three Chinamen were convicted, of whom one was hanged, and two were sentenced to penal servitude for life. Immediately after the sentences were pronounced, the man condemned to be hanged exclaimed, pointing to some of the prisoners who had just been let off, 'Seven of those men whom you have let go are guilty!' No notice was, however, taken of this remark.

The one who was hanged declared from the first that he had committed all the murders, or would-be murders. He drew a plan of the house (a most curious specimen of drawing), to illustrate his confession, with little figures to represent the bodies lying in the different rooms as he had left them. Mine was lying in the middle of my room, just where I recollected the man striking at me; but how I came to be eventually in the other room hidden under the bed this man professed himself unable to say. Several theories were suggested to account for this curious fact, the most probable one being that, after remaining absolutely unconscious for some time, I may have partly recovered, and have had sufficient instinct of self-preservation to wander away and hide myself.

It was elicited at the trial that the sixty brave Chinamen who set forth to murder one Englishman and some women and children did not dare to do so without first making sure that the Englishman had no revolver.

They arranged to have it stolen from Mrs. L.'s bedroom on the afternoon before the murder. This service was probably rendered them by the Chinese ayah, who alone had access to the room, and who was proved to have been a great friend of the cook, the leader of the expedition. That cook was, unfortunately, never caught. The revolver was found next day hidden in the jungle.

Mrs. L. gave evidence that her husband, on hearing a noise, had gone to the front-door unarmed, and had almost immediately staggered back into the room, wounded and gasping out, 'Give me my revolver!' She flew to get it, and found the case, but it was empty! Then she recollected turning and seeing her husband surrounded by Chinamen; but after this she remembered no more, being, like myself, struck down and left for dead.

The Chinese ayah, who was believed to have stolen the revolver and made everything ready for the murderers, got off scot-free. So did the twelve Malay police, who were supposed to guard the Residency, but who fled like rabbits at the approach of danger. So did about fifty-seven of the murderers, if the estimate of their number at sixty, made independently by several witnesses, be correct. So did the Eurasian superintendent, who was believed to have been an accessory before the fact; but this could not be proved against him.

Poor Apat died soon after the assizes under very suspicious circumstances. Mr. Rose had asked some officers of a man-of-war to lunch at Durian Sabatang, and he was much annoyed at the remark-

ably bad luncheon that was set before himself and his guests. At last he spoke about it to the servant in waiting, saying, 'Tell Apat this is really too bad.' The servant replied, 'Apat, sir, is dead.' 'Dead!' exclaimed Mr. Rose, aghast; and the guests, overhearing, inquired, with horror, 'What, is the man who cooked the food we have been eating dead?' The servant repeated his statement; whereat they all rose and went into the kitchen, but found that Apat's body had already been carried away by his friends. They followed, and a sort of post-mortem examination was held, when the conclusion was come to that the death might have occurred from his having himself taken too much opium, or, on the other hand, it might have resulted from some other poison. A suspicious circumstance was that a Chinese sculleryman, lately hired by Mr. Rose, was missing, and never reappeared, and that Apat's wages, which had been paid him that morning, were also missing. It was suggested that the sculleryman was an emissary of the Penang Hoey, sent to murder Apat on account of the evidence he had given at the trial; but this seems improbable, as Apat had given no evidence that could inculpate any one. He had been in his usual health up to the day of his death.

With the sad and mysterious death of Apat 'the Faithful' ended the series of horrors which will, in my mind, be always associated with a phrase apparently calculated to produce none but pleasant impressions, namely 'Two Days at the Seaside.'

WITH LALAGE A-MAYING.

LATE, late last night, beside the hearth,
I conned old Herrick's pages ;
From grave to gay, from wit to mirth,
I passed by easy stages,

And reached that happy frame of mind
That soon induces slumber
And dreams, in which we leave behind
The cares of life that cumber.

Wild was the winter wind outside ;
But, in ecstatic vision,
Through summer lands of joy I glide,
And pleasaunces Elysian.

With daffodils the meadows smiled,
And violets and daisies,
And roses red the eye beguiled
Through all the garden-mazes.

I saw the white-thorn full in bloom,
I heard the skylark singing,
And, far within the woodland gloom,
The merle's clear whistle ringing.

Down, down beside a purling rill
Came peals of silvery laughter,
Which sportive echo from the hill
For aye was following after.

And I was 'ware a troop was there
Of youths and shepherdesses,
Who paced along with lute and song
And flower-enwoven tresses.

One from that band approached me then,
The sweetest girl and fairest,
And O, her face, what earthly pen
Might tell its charm, the rarest !

She smiled, she blushed, and, blushing, spake
In accents soft and thrilling :
' In fairyland come, joyaunce make,
For Lalage is willing !'

With Lalage A-Maying.

I seized her hand, and o'er the fields
We sped away together,
Flushed with the joy that Nature yields
In golden summer weather.

We sought the white-thorn in the glade,
And pulled the fragrant blossom ;
And for her hair a wreath I made,
A posy for her bosom.

And in that dream within a dream
My arms would aye enfold her—
My queen, my ladye, she did seem ;
And how I loved I told her.

Then on and on we wandered free,
God's sunlight round us playing ;
And O, 'twas sweet, 'twas sweet to be
With Lalage a-Maying !

* * * *

Late, late last night I woke to pain,
Cold, comfortless, and lonely ;
The moaning wind, the dismal rain,
Were my companions only.

J. H. DAVIES.

THE FOREIGNERS.

BY ELEANOR C. PRICE, AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS,
'VALENTINA,' ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

'WHENCE ART THOU, GRIMMEST
AMONG MEN?'

ON the third afternoon of the Prince's visit, he went out riding with a large party in the forest. Some of the quieter and older people were left behind, and Pauline Mowbray remained with her mother. M. de Coigny, who admired the sweet English girl, wished her to join the riding-party; but even her father, who, of course, was going, did not second him very heartily, and her mother's polite declining seemed quite right and natural to everybody. France certainly is not a paradise for girls.

Pauline, however, had no regrets, and did not feel herself at all ill-used. She sat on a shady terrace with her guardians and a few other ladies, surrounded by lapdogs and poodles. It was very hot, but the dry, fresh, sweet-smelling shade of the cedars was a pleasant atmosphere; the ladies sat and gossiped, and stirred the air gently with their large fans. Behind them was the garden-front of the château, with its many windows, the sun sparkling on all its ornamental points of gilded ironwork.

It was like a scene in a picture or a play—unreal, fantastic, and brilliant; the picturesque splendour of the old world, the world of which Talleyrand said, 'Qui n'a pas vécu avant 1789, ne connaît pas la douceur de vivre.' Servants in bright liveries came

hurrying down to the lower terrace, where the ladies were sitting, carrying silver trays of fruit and cakes for the afternoon 'goûter.' Pauline had never seen Boiscarré quite so fairy-like, so gay and wonderful, as it was that afternoon with all its human attractions away. She sat quietly enjoying the Watteau-like scene, half forgetting her own private heartaches, sometimes giving gentle and rather dull answers to a fat old lady of very ancient family, who was dividing her attentions between her Maltese dog and the English girl. The dog, on the whole, was the more amusing. The girl seemed distraite; why wasn't she married? What was the use of having a pretty face and sitting here among old dowagers like a statue?

Presently Mrs. Mowbray went away into the house to write letters, and her daughter was getting up to follow her, but Madame de Maulévrier looked round and said, 'Stay with us, Pauline;' and she was not sorry to obey. Old Madame de Landry seemed rather pleased, and went on asking the girl funny little questions about her brothers and sisters, showing off Petit's tricks meanwhile, and teaching her the right way of throwing him bits of sugar. Some of the other ladies were talking scandal in a low voice. 'Take care, mesdames,' said Madame de Maulévrier, 'the child will hear you;' and then, muttering to herself that such talk was fit neither for man, woman, nor

child, she moved away from these ladies, and sat down close to Pauline and the old Vicomtesse.

There was a certain sadness in the girl's face as she spoke of her home in this place and scene, which seemed removed from it by centuries as well as miles. It was a strange mixed feeling, for Boiscarré was, in its way, enchanting, as Maulévrier had been; and yet life in this country was altogether to Pauline like a magic sleep, painful as well as sweet, exciting, unhealthy to the clear English nature. A fresh breath of the sea, of the pines about her home, Pauline felt would blow all the enchantment away; she half dreaded, half longed, to be at home again. A stranger in a strange land—passing through, and one day finding herself in golden chains—if she had never met Gérard, what a good happy life she might have lived at home! Now, fresh and bracing as it might be, there must always be something wanting; one could never be the same girl again.

'I wish I had never left home! I wish I had never seen him!' thought Pauline, with a sudden revulsion, looking round at the marble-stepped terraces of the enchanted garden. 'I wish—I wish I was at Croome, doing the flowers with Aunt Lucia!'

A longing for escape had come over her: she remembered a day when she had walked up a hill at Croome with rain beating against her, carrying a basket for Aunt Lucia to some poor woman, and how there was a joyful excitement in fighting against the wind and rain, and how the Rector had overtaken her and asked in his gruffest tones, 'What rubbish have you got there? Is your aunt sending more wine and things to that old humbug?' But, in spite of his indignation, he

took the basket, and carried it up the hill to the cottage-door; and the poor dirty old woman heaped blessings on him, for which he did not show the smallest sign of gratitude. Here at Boiscarré surely it never rained; the sun always shone as placidly as now; that deep sky behind the turrets never knew a cloud, and people never did anything but idle about and amuse themselves. Pauline almost wished for a good rattling thunderstorm. And yet she did Boiscarré injustice; it had had its storms, worse than anything ever known in England, and perhaps some day it will have them again.

But as Pauline sat there and thought of Croome, with an inner haunting knowledge that when she found herself there again all the sunshine of life, such as it was, would have stayed behind in France and be vainly longed for, a very odd thing happened. A servant came from the house bringing a card, followed at a little distance by a man, at whom Pauline stared vaguely, with a dim suspicion that she was going out of her mind, or else that she would have to believe in ghosts for the rest of her life. He was a square sort of man, dressed in gray clothes, with an English swing in his walk.

The footman came forward, glancing round the circle of ladies.

'For Madame Mowbray,' he said, in a low voice.

'Give it to mademoiselle,' said Madame de Maulévrier; and Pauline took the card which was handed to her.

'Rev. B. Dunstan.' Of course there was no occasion to look at it. She did not feel exactly surprised—it was only another chapter in this uncomfortable romance; but a second glance at the real Ben, advancing solidly along the

terrace with his hat fixed on his head, restored her, in some measure, to her senses, and brought a healthy feeling of startled anxiety.

'Aunt Lucia must be ill!' she exclaimed; and, without waiting to answer Madame de Maulévrier's question, 'Who is this, Pauline?' or to notice the amazement of the other ladies, whose dogs also began to bark in chorus at this strange intruder, she left them all, and hurried forward to meet Ben in the sunshine.

He was tired and dusty; the grave worn look in his face was not reassuring, but for a moment there was a happy light in his eyes as she came flying to him from the cedar shadow. He put out both his hands and took hers, with an exclamation,

'I thought I should never find you!'

Then he dropped her hands, and gave her a quick glance from head to foot—so white and dainty, and so much more beautiful than she ever was before.

'A dusty beggar like me—I'm not fit to shake hands with you,' he said.

'O yes, you are. I'm so glad. I was just wishing for somebody from home,' said Pauline, with an eagerness which made him smile, though he was not fool enough to flatter himself that she had wished for *him*. No; her welcome was far too frank and unconscious for that.

'Is your mother there?' he said, looking beyond Pauline at the group under the trees.

All those ladies were spying curiously at him with different expressions of horror.

'What an Englishman! He doesn't bow; he stands there with his hat on; he clutches the hands of Mademoiselle Mowbray in a way that never was seen

before. What a bear, what a monster! Not a gentleman, of course; but the English so seldom are that. But what can he have to do with that charming girl? This is too extraordinary! Can dear Madame de Maulévrier perhaps explain it?'

No; Madame de Maulévrier was as much startled as anybody else. At first she hardly perceived her duty; but after a minute she got up, and prepared to go to the rescue of her young friend, who meanwhile was talking most confidentially with the barbarian.

'Mamma is in the house; she went to write letters. Papa is out riding with the Prince. But why did you come? Is Aunt Lucia ill, or any of the children?'

'No; they are all well. I came to see your father and mother on business. Miss Mowbray wanted me to come, and it seemed the best way,' said Ben quietly.

He looked straight into her face. Could he venture to say any more at present? He was not smiling now, but quite grave and anxious; the cloud of trouble had only lifted for a moment at sight of her. Must he let it descend, and wrap her, too, in its chilling folds? Had she courage to bear bad news, this delicate lovely creature, who was no longer somehow the simple spirited girl that used to come to Croome? At the first moment Ben had not seen the change; now at every moment it became more clear to him; but he could not understand it.

'But what is it?' she said rather dreamily. 'Why didn't Aunt Lucia write? She *must* be ill.'

'No; why should I deceive you?' said Ben. 'I came because a messenger seemed best. Not a pleasant task, to disturb you in the middle of all this; with some

sort of a Prince, too, to add to the glory of it.'

'I know you hate princes, but don't speak evil of them here,' said Pauline, smiling. She was thinking what an oddly uncouth creature he was, and yet what a safety and confidence one felt in talking to him.

'Well, but if you are a messenger, what is the message? It must be something very important.'

Ben frowned impatiently; this trifling tone chimed in badly with his humour, and yet his face softened again directly. How could he feel anything but pity for her now?

'Suppose we go and find your mother,' he said. And he took her hand very gently in his again, forgetting all spectators, and looking into her blue eyes, where a troubled consciousness of some great danger was slowly dawning.

At this crisis Madame de Maulévrier walked up to them.

'My dear Pauline,' she said, 'will you make me acquainted with this gentleman?'

Pauline turned round, blushing, while Ben dropped her hand in a terror that was quite new to him, and made him twice as bold the next moment. The Marquise had an air of stately disapproval, which did not vanish when Pauline said,

'It is Mr. Dunstan, madame—a friend of ours. He is come to see my father on business.'

'Ah, Madame Mowbray was saying something about business,' said the Marquise, making Ben an overwhelming curtsy; in spite of which he only just lifted his hat, and put it on again. 'I hope it is nothing, monsieur, which will hurry my friends back to England?'

'I fancy they will think it as well to go home,' said Ben, with his sturdiest air.

'Well, Madame Mowbray will decide that. Shall we send to tell her you are here?'

'No, thank you,' said Ben; 'Miss Mowbray will take me to her; won't you?'

'Allons,' said Madame de Maulévrier. 'Come, my child.' And she walked away with them along the terrace.

Ben thought it all horrid formality; he was quite incapable of understanding Madame de Maulévrier or her motives. He did not know that she guessed the nature of his news; that she feared a shock for Pauline, whom she really loved, if this rude man was allowed to break things to her as he chose; and also that she could not have allowed such a crime against etiquette, in the eyes, too, of all those gossiping women, as the walking away together of these two young people, English barbarians as they might be. Pauline went with her silently: no one knew the thrill of pleasure and pain with which she heard Gérard's mother call her 'my child.' Madame de Maulévrier did not speak again to Pauline, as they went towards the house, but addressed a few formal remarks to Ben, who answered shortly and gruffly: she thought him horrible.

Mrs. Mowbray looked up from her writing, to see Ben Dunstan standing at the door; and she got up at once, trembling all over, and turning pale. In another moment Pauline's arms were round her.

'Mother, is it bad news?' said the girl, hiding her face on her shoulder.

'Is it too late? Why didn't they telegraph? Why didn't John—' began Mrs. Mowbray, in a strained eager voice.

'We did telegraph,' said Ben, walking forward to the table.

'But things were worse than we thought; and, after all, if you had been in England all the time I don't believe anything could have been done. It has been a rascally affair altogether.'

Mrs. Mowbray was looking at him with eyes full of terror. She did not ask him to go on; her head was full of confusing thoughts—her husband, her children, this child who was clinging to her. She knew very well what had happened, and all the consequences; but she stood quite still, holding Pauline closely, and except in that painful look she showed no sign of violent feeling. Ben had never liked her particularly, but he thought just now she was a brave woman. He was going to speak again, but she silenced him with a sign, and called after Madame de Maulévrier, who was turning away from the door,

'Madame, wait a moment; would you be so good as to let Pauline go with you? We must talk, and she won't understand. Go, my darling; I don't want you here now.'

'Viens, mon enfant!' said Madame de Maulévrier almost tenderly; but Pauline did not seem to hear her.

'Let me stay with you, mother,' she said.

'Why don't you let her stay?' said Ben. 'She has plenty of courage. She had better know all from the beginning. Let her help you; she can't begin too soon.'

To Mrs. Mowbray these words sounded little short of brutal. Her Pauline, her sheltered petted darling!—and what an odious hint of the future! But Pauline herself was quite differently impressed, and looked up, meeting Ben's keen eyes gratefully.

'Yes, mother, let me help you,' she said.

'Well, my dear, when you

want me, you will find me in my room,' said Madame de Maulévrier; and she went away.

Then came the long, painful, hopeless talk which Ben had been rehearsing with himself all the way from England. As soon as the bank's affairs were known to be hopeless, he had both written and telegraphed to Mr. Mowbray; letter and telegram had arrived at Maulévrier after they had left for Boiscarré. On the day of the smash he telegraphed again; and then, at Miss Mowbray's wish, he started off and travelled hard to bring them all particulars, and to be of use to them on their way home. Not finding them at Maulévrier, he hurried on without rest to Boiscarré; and he was of opinion that French trains and French horses were alike the slowest things ever known.

The West Mercian Bank was gone; the liability of the shareholders, though not actually unlimited, was very great; and it seemed too likely that the Mowbrays would lose almost all they had.

Ben had only done Pauline justice—she had plenty of courage, and plenty of sense too; and now that this reality had come to wake her from her dreams, it seemed to him that the change he had seen was passing away, and that she was once more the bright girl he had admired. A spoilt child, no doubt, but with a great deal of fine character under the spoiling. Poor Mrs. Mowbray, as she became more and more conscious of the blow that had fallen, lost her self-command for a moment, and leaned over the table, hiding her face. Pauline, sitting close beside her, took her hand, and held it between her own, talking to Ben all the time, asking straightforward questions, which were answered with almost

unnecessary fulness and plainness; he saw no use in disguising the facts or softening them down. Whatever chivalry Ben had was of the thoroughly modern kind; in proportion to his respect for a woman, he thought she could, and must, bear her full share of trouble. This, at least, was his theory, though in what concerned Pauline he had often caught himself falling short of it, a foolish tenderness inclining him to save her, and spare her any extra pain. But there was a fine satisfaction, after all, in meeting her eyes, and telling her the worst; she must know it some day; and this strong-hearted lover even thought, or believed he thought, that a touch of poverty and hardship would not be altogether bad for her.

Mr. Mowbray came in before their talk was done, and then it all began over again. He took the news quietly, refusing to believe, with his usual hopefulness, that things were quite so bad as Ben represented them. What tried him most was leaving Bois-carré immediately; but his wife and Ben both insisted on the necessity of this, and the next thing was to take Madame de Maulévrier into their counsels. They had left some of their things at Maulévrier, and, after consulting the Marquise, they decided to go back there that night, and to start for England the next morning.

By this time the riding-party had returned, and the château was again full of its gay visitors; only, as it happened, Gérard de Maulévrier had gone off to Ville-mur with one or two of the Prince's Spanish companions, to show them its curiosities, and did not come in till much later than the rest. Madame de Maulévrier was full of sympathising kindness

for her English friends in their trouble, and was not deceived by Mr. Mowbray's trying to make light of it. She had a talk with Madame de Coigny, who was desolated and heart-broken, ordered her carriage, and drove away with her friends through the forest to Maulévrier, two hours after Ben Dunstan had arrived with the news.

Then Pauline, sitting in the carriage and looking back at the vanishing turrets of Bois-carré, remembered how she had sat dreaming on the terrace that afternoon, and had wished for a storm to break into that oppressive luxurious peace. The storm had come, and was whirling her away in the skirts of it, though the calmest and brightest of skies still smiled over Bois-carré. It was well, she thought; for, after all, she did not realise the future, and was not afraid of it, and only imagined herself rather more useful to her mother than she had been before, with dim floating plans of teaching her sisters, and learning to make cakes. It was even well that Gérard had not been there to say good-bye; and she thought that now she would soon forget him, or only think of him as the most interesting figure in a wonderful series of pictures, which, of course, must be remembered, to a certain extent, all one's life long.

CHAPTER XVIII.

'COULD LOVE PART THUS?'

COMING back to Maulévrier was very like coming home, though they had been only three days away from it, and it was with a strange feeling of peace and familiarity that Pauline lay down that night in her old room once more. She did not sleep much, however,

and she got up very early, and went out for a last ramble round the place which had such a charm for her; in its silent solemn bareness it seemed far grander than Boisecarré. It was beautiful too in the golden freshness of morning; the birds were singing, and all the rustling leaves welcoming the day. Pauline could not think without pain of saying good-bye to it for ever.

Her walk in the old precincts was shortened by meeting Ben, who was looking about him with a good deal of interest mixed with contempt. He was unpleasantly cheerful; he had got rid of his burden of bad news, and was satisfied of the courage of its rightful bearers. After his night's rest he was matter-of-fact, and inclined to make the best of things and to sneer at Frenchmen. He began saying to Pauline that it would take a fortune to keep up a rubbishing old place like this—that the whole thing was absurd, and ought to be pulled down—one must come to France to see the real nonsense of old families.

'That palace yesterday was simply offensive,' said Ben. 'This is not so smart, but just as insolent. When one thinks about it, the Revolution was not wonderful. It must have done people good to see these places blazing.'

Pauline looked at him vaguely; the spell seemed to have fallen on her again; her eyes, which were hollow and almost tearful, suggested that she had forgotten everything but the fact that, in two or three hours, Maulévrier would have become a place that she remembered. After a moment she smiled; for Ben's incongruous remarks did not exactly make her angry.

'O, do you think so?' she said; and, without stopping to talk to him any more, she walked on into

the house, leaving him standing in the courtyard. He looked after her, and saw that she did not go up-stairs, but crossed the hall to the left, and went in at one of the high carved doorways.

After a moment, he did not quite know why, Ben followed her. The house was of course unknown to him, and he found himself in an anteroom hung with old family pictures, with two curtained doorways at the further end of it. He went through one of these, and made a few steps forward, finding himself in a large library. His eyes went roving over the shelves; but he was not thinking of books just then, and the sight of Pauline, in a distant window, would have driven the most curious editions out of the most literary head.

She was standing, half leaning on the back of a large old sofa, in her favourite corner, as we know, and gazing out of the window with a hopeless dreariness that could not possibly be misunderstood. So heavy were her thoughts, so strong was the feeling that this was a last good-bye to the pleasant haunts of romance, and that life in future—no, Ben saw very well that she was not thinking of the future at all, or of his bad news, or of any place or people on earth but Maulévrier and its owner—but so heavy were her thoughts, filling her whole self so entirely, that she heard no footstep and did not know he was there. With a feeling of shame and remorse at having followed her—for he was not a stupid man, with all his obstinacies—Ben turned away and stole out of the room. He went back into the court, let himself out of the tall gates, and began strolling down through the damp cool shade of the avenue, flecked with arrows of gold light that darted

through the trembling lime-leaves. He had not gone many yards when a carriage turned suddenly into the avenue from the village, and came dashing up towards the château. It was driven by a handsome wild-looking young man, with a pale face and a long moustache. Ben looked up as he passed, and the two men stared full at each other.

Ben was not at all given to recollections, sentimental or other, but he never forgot that first meeting; a sort of cold hopeless shiver ran all over him, and then came a flush of something like furious hatred. Boiscarré and Maulévrier had impressed him with their 'insolence,' but towards the inhabitants, so far, he had felt nothing but amused superiority, and it had not occurred to him that the Marquis, who certainly had troubled his thoughts a little during the past month, was probably very different from them all. He knew at once that this must be the master of Maulévrier, and his spirit rose, with what he would have called manly independence, against this young aristocrat who matched his house so well. We know Gérard's real gentleness, but Ben did not and never could know it, and he only saw a haughty, frowning face, full of what he called insolence, and longed to punish. No doubt there was some high principle at the bottom of this longing; the possibility that a woman might admire this sort of thing had nothing at all to do with it! Ben was a clever fellow in his way, and very honest: but his own real motives may sometimes have been hid from him.

His self-control was tried immediately by the stopping of the carriage, and the approach of the pale young man, hat in hand, and full of tragic earnestness.

'May I ask, monsieur — you are Mr. Mowbray's friend, I believe?'

'Yes, monsieur,' said Ben grumpily.

Gérard afterwards reflected that he was a cross little fellow, but at that moment he was not impressed by him personally in any way, and only thought of him as a means of information. Ben would have liked him still less if he had known how completely his scowls were wasted.

'I was out yesterday, most unfortunately,' Gérard went on to explain. 'I was struck dumb when they told me what had happened — and of course I follow at the earliest moment.'

'You need not have troubled yourself — there's no good to be done,' said Ben; but the Marquis took no notice of this.

'You brought the news?' he said. 'As their friend, pray tell me the truth. I cannot believe that these charming people have lost everything — it seems impossible.'

'We won't enter into it now,' said Ben dryly. 'Perhaps things may be better than they seem.'

Gérard threw up his hands and shrugged his shoulders in a sort of despair. Ben looked at him with a hard grin; he thought this fine gentleman was making quite a funny exhibition of his feelings. Who was likely to feel most, he wondered, this fellow or himself? Yet women might be fools enough to believe in all this nonsensical show, while they closed their eyes to the real thing which lay a little deeper.

It never occurred to Gérard that he was being criticised; if he thought at all of the creature who was talking to him, he thought he was some heartless animal of business who made a trade of other people's losses — not really a friend

of the Mowbrays, that was impossible.

'I am very early,' he said. 'Can you tell me, monsieur, shall I find any one down yet?'

'Nobody but Miss Mowbray,' answered Ben. 'She has been walking about the garden, and now she is in the library.'

'Ah, merci!' said Gérard; and in another moment he and his dog-cart were gone, disappeared behind the iron gates, and Ben was left in the avenue.

He was always doing it—he knew it; cutting his own throat, telling people things to his own disadvantage. He called himself a hundred fools, as he walked down towards the village, and then changed his mind, and told himself how absurd it was to be afraid of that French ape of a fellow; but the fact remained that he wished they could have started an hour ago. This place had evidently some strange influence on Pauline; some girls were such romantic idiots. A Frenchman always married for money, Ben believed; and he did not know why this fellow should be an exception, though of course Pauline might make the most bigoted Frenchman forget his national customs. But if the villain had been flirting with her and meaning nothing, just with the concentrated villany of all his ancestors—Ben clenched his fists, walking resolutely away from the château all the time, and quite forgot that he was a clergyman.

Pauline was still standing by the library window when Gérard came into the room. She turned round and looked at him, trembling, as he walked up to her, and in another instant he was holding her in his arms, he had kissed her, and they had forgotten everything in the world but each other. It was one of those minutes in

life when a power greater than all laws must have its way; but it was only a minute; such happiness, bright and terrible as lightning, is gone almost as soon as it comes. Pauline hardly realised what had happened before she was trying to escape, but Gérard would not let her go so easily.

'My dearest—you know how I love you—don't send me away,' he said under his breath.

'Don't say it,' sighed poor Pauline; 'I know—I know.'

As soon as she could think at all, she thought that she had better tell him the truth; not blame him, not be angry with him, but tell him how well she knew that this was wrong—that they must forget each other. And yet how hard it was, how cruel, that such misery must be! She could not speak, but sobbed once or twice, and tried to turn her face away from him. All seemed black darkness, and Gérard's presence the only light; but the darkness must belong to her.

'Don't, O don't; it is very wrong,' she murmured. 'You must not. Please go away.'

'What do you know? Tell me what you know,' Gérard asked softly.

'She told me. I have known it all this time. I have been dreadfully silly; and you *must* go away, and we must never see each other again.'

'Very well,' said Gérard. 'Every one would say the same, no doubt. Yes; there is nothing to look forward to but horrible bondage. But you love me, I know you do, and you are my only love; and we may at least have five minutes of happiness. There is plenty of misery for both of us in the future. You love me, Pauline?'

Till Gérard talked like this the poor girl may have had some tiny

spark of hope, some faint idea that he might find some way of escaping from this hated engagement of his; but now the spark went out suddenly. He might dread his future, but it never occurred to him to give it up for her. She felt a little wonder. Surely a man could not be forced to marry against his will. But she did not think or reason about it then, or define in her mind the different kinds of honour; only she knew by instinct that he could not be allowed to make violent love to her, calmly telling her at the same time that he must marry another woman.

'You have no right to ask me; let me go,' she said, feeling suddenly proud and strong.

'I know you do,' said Gérard.

He was not holding her any more, but standing before her, looking down into her face with passionate eyes that she hardly dared to meet.

'You are very cruel,' she said suddenly. 'I don't think it is manly of you. What have I done to make you speak like this? I wish you had not followed us. You might have let us go quietly away. We have lost all our money, and shall have to work. I shall have to work; and you need not have given me all this fresh pain; it was bad enough before.'

'My dearest, listen to me.'

'No, you are not to call me that; it is wicked of you. I mean to forget you directly. I shall. Don't talk to me any more, you make me miserable. What is the use of it all?'

'If you are miserable, what am I?' said Gérard.

He was a little puzzled by her indignation and sudden coldness. There was almost scorn in her blue eyes, and he could not understand it at all. In his mind, of course, love and marriage were

not connected as they were in hers. He would have given worlds to marry Pauline; but as fate and family duty had arranged for him to marry Françoise de Brye, what was there to be said? Pauline also, no doubt, would go home and marry some rich Englishman, to whom her want of 'dot' would not signify. The idea cut Gérard like a knife, but it was one of those things that happen every day in this hopeless world.

'I do not think you will forget me so soon,' he said. 'I shall remember you for ever; and for your sake I might even wish to have been an Englishman. You say these things, my Pauline, but the truth is that we adore each other.' And he caught her suddenly in his arms again. 'It is only to say good-bye.'

'My son!'

Pauline snatched herself from Gérard, and stood covered with burning blushes, bending over the end of the sofa and clutching it with both hands, while he turned almost fiercely to meet his mother. Madame de Maulévrier stood there, in her old plain gown and her garden hat, her face paler than usual. She did not look at Pauline, but gazed at Gérard with frowning, mystified eyes.

'Mon Dieu! am I dreaming?' she said, after an awful pause. 'Are these English manners? I was looking for Mademoiselle Mowbray. Madame her mother is waiting for her.'

Pauline felt dizzy. She did not know how she was to reach the door; but in some way or other she must escape from these two. She began to walk quickly down the room, tremulous, and looking on the floor. As she came near Madame de Maulévrier, she half paused, and then hurried on again, not daring to

look up into her face. Neither of them spoke, or made any attempt to stop her. The unhappy girl tottered out of the room, and then quickening her pace, flew up-stairs like a hunted creature. It seemed to her that no shame and degradation could be deeper than this.

'Am I dreaming? Are these English manners?' Madame de Maulévrier's voice was ringing in her ears. Pauline thought she would never cease to hear it; that all her life that awful moment would be as present as it was now.

As for Gérard, he too was terribly ashamed. His mother's exclamation had brought him suddenly to his senses. He turned away and leaned against the window. The Marquise came up and stood close beside him.

'So I was deceived in that girl,' she said, after a silence. 'Has this been going on all the time, Gérard? I took her for an angel, with her soft looks.'

'She is an angel. The whole thing is my fault; but what is the use of talking!' exclaimed Gérard. 'This marriage—I always fought against it from the first; and, since I knew Pauline, my life has been nothing but misery. It is only this instant, finding her sad, I told her I loved her. We were saying good-bye for ever. It was my doing; she would hardly hear me speak. You might have spared us; we shall never see each other again.'

'You are a fool,' said the Marquise angrily. 'Spared you, indeed! You are mad, my son. You have been behaving all this time like an unworthy, dishonourable man. To this girl, who you say you love, you have behaved even worse than to—the other. She knew nothing of your engagement. I suppose she does

not know of it even now; and she goes away expecting you to marry her. Is that the fine position we are in?'

'She knows of my engagement,' said Gérard.

'Then she is beyond my understanding, and I beg that I may never hear her name again. She is English—that is the only explanation, for her parents are well-bred people. Poor Madame Mowbray! she has troubles enough, I must say. As to you, Gérard, in heaven's name let us have no more farewells. You have shocked me terribly, and now you will do as I ask you.'

'What?' said Gérard.

He looked the picture of despair as he stood leaning his head against the window-mullion.

'Go to your room, and stay there till these people are gone. They will not be surprised; they do not know you are here, for I imagine that mademoiselle will not talk about you just now.'

'You need not be afraid—' began Gérard.

'My son, it is enough. I do not mean you to see her again; you are mad, and I shall treat you accordingly. Go; do you hear me?' The little mother stood there and gave her orders with an imperial air; her tall son did not attempt to resist or disobey, but without another word went away to his room.

The Marquise was right; Mr. and Mrs. Mowbray thought he was still at Boiscarré, and left messages for him with her, hardly noticing, in the hurry of parting, with all their own troubles on their minds, the gravity and stiffness of her manner. Ben wondered what had become of the long-legged hero, but wisely kept his thoughts to himself; he looked at Pauline, keeping close to her mother, perfectly silent, with a

veil tied over her face in some strange new care of her complexion, and guessed that some kind of scene had happened in the library. Whatever it had been, Ben thought he need not make himself miserable about it; if such a thing was possible, it seemed that Pauline might have snubbed the Marquis.

So Gérard's English friends left Maulévrier; and he was not there to wish them good-bye; and his mother, who had been so brightened and amused by their visit, stood listening to the rolling wheels that carried them away, and said to herself, with hands devoutly clasped together, 'Thank God, they are gone!'

CHAPTER XIX.

CLEEVE POINT.

ONE evening in August, four young people were sitting together on the top of a cliff, where the grass grew soft and fine, where wild thyme clustered among small ledges of gray rocks, over which the sea-wind blew. The afternoon had been misty and warm; now the sky was covered with fleecy clouds, through which a red glow of light was flushing slowly upwards, for the sun was near setting, and the gray day meant to end in a glory of brilliant colour. 'That broad water of the west,' on which the misty light was falling, changed gradually from brown and silver to rose, and lay rippling, 'incarnadined,' in all the magic beauty, usually hidden from ordinary eyes, for which poets know and love it.

Lower down the cliff, on the landward side, some great Scotch firs were standing silent, for even their musical murmuring would have broken the solemn stillness

of that evening. But the western light was piercing under their dark green roof, and their tall trunks were beginning to glow like fiery pillars there in the twilight. Up the steep soft path among their roots, climbing above the old gabled house that lay under their shelter in a dip of the downs, out on the green sheep-walk bare of trees, to the top of the cliff, where it broke suddenly in a steep descent to the beach, Ralph and Philip and Kitty Mowbray had carried their sister Pauline in a chair, that she might breathe the fresh sea air, and see the sunset from their watch-tower once again.

They had brought rugs and cushions, and she was comfortably settled, with her face to the west, and with a ledge of rock behind her. The three sat round in front of her, and they had now been there nearly an hour, talking over all kinds of old recollections. Their first fairy tales had been legends of the west; in their games they had always been Druids or King Arthur's knights, who, by some curious arrangement of history, were defending Cleeve Point against the Saracens. The enemy's ships had to be watched for by some bold advanced guard, and signalled to the fir-grove down below, from which various gallant warriors, with swords and lances, would dash forward to challenge them, and stop their way up the Channel. The only sad part of these games, which were full of romance and imagination, had been that Ralph always would be the leading character, whether it was arch-Druid or King Arthur or Lancelot. Philip had no chance at all, though he was only a year younger, and quite capable of standing up for himself.

Pauline lay dreamily back on

her cushions, and listened and laughed, and watched the clouds as they melted gradually away in that rising light of evening. The three faces before her were full of earnestness. They were a strange mixture, those three, of romance and common sense, with an endless power of scorn, which was bestowed on all show, all cant, all pretension, all dulness, all frivolity, even all sentiment, except what belonged to themselves. They were shy, odd creatures; full of observation, silent to everybody but each other. Philip was the pleasantest of them, and the most inclined to like his fellow-creatures, though his manner and remarks were rough and arrogant enough. Ralph was dark, quiet, scientific, vain, and satirical, with a deep contempt for all human weaknesses; his sister Kitty, a plain, clever child of fifteen, adored him, and did her best to copy all his faults. She in her turn was copied, though in a weaker fashion, by Carry at thirteen; but Carry was softened by the dependence of her youngest brother George, a gentle, delicate little fellow, who had more of his eldest sister's amiability.

There could be no doubt that Pauline, both in beauty and sweetness, was the flower of the family. She was very different from them all, having little of their strength and independence of character, and the consequence was that she was their darling. No one ever quarrelled with Pauline, even in childish days; the boys could not resist her soft ways, and she did everything she liked with them. While she had plenty of spirit and courage to make her a delightful playfellow, and was never afraid of mischief, she was always the one to beg off punishment, and help her brothers out of the worst scrapes. Of late years

Philip had hinted that she was getting rather slow; but Ralph and Kitty did not agree with him, so he said no more about it.

'Yes, it's an extraordinary thing,' said Kitty, finishing off a long conversation on the old games; 'these younger ones are made of different stuff from us altogether. Why, we were never ourselves. I'm never myself now—at least very seldom.'

'You had better come to yourself, playtime's over,' remarked Ralph.

'Don't talk about it. Polly, don't you agree with me? Don't you see how different those children are? They are nothing but Carry and George Mowbray, two dull little creatures as ever lived. When I was their age I was some character in history, or a stranger on a tour through England, or a French girl escaped from the Revolution, or an unknown Princess. Weren't you?'

'Not exactly to amuse myself, I think,' said Pauline dreamily. 'When you and the boys made me somebody, I suppose I was.'

'Yes, my dear. It's long ago, so you may forget; but I know you were generally Guinevere, because I never thought you were sad, and splendid, and desperate enough.'

Pauline coloured faintly, and laughed.

'Look at the sea,' she said.

'Stop your nonsense, Kit,' said Philip. 'It's all over, so what's the good of talking about it? Let's talk about something else. Tell us about France, Polly, if you're bright enough. We have waited patiently, I'm sure.'

'We've come to the conclusion that France was not so jolly after all; but perhaps that's only because of your illness,' added Kitty. 'Father enjoyed it, and was awfully sorry to come home.'

Mother, on the contrary, was glad, and didn't enjoy it at all; but I think you were a trouble to her, Polly: she saw you were getting ill. I'm not sure that a nervous fever is such a bad sort of illness,' she went on, with a deliberative air. 'I don't suppose the pain is very serious, and it must be a pleasure to recover one's spirits gradually, as one gets a little better. I suppose the bank was the cause of it; it must have been a horrid shock to you, and if you had died the directors ought to have been hanged, in my opinion. Did you think about the bank all the time while you were ill?'

'I did not think of it at all,' Pauline answered. 'Do look at the clouds.'

But it was only Ralph who turned his head for a moment; the others were intent on her.

'Tell us the truth, Polly,' said Philip; 'which do you like best, Frenchmen or Englishmen?'

'At present, dear Phil, I hate them both,' said his sister.

'That's a sell for Ben Dunstan. He said he felt sure you had sense enough to like Englishmen. I say, Polly, was he very devoted on the journey home? He was here every day, you know, inquiring after you.'

'Pity he should waste his time,' growled Ralph.

'I don't see that it need be waste of time. I like old Dunstan; he's a friend of mine. The most ornamental people are not always the best, you know, Polly.'

'You had better tell that comforting piece of news to Mr. Dunstan himself,' she answered carelessly.

'That's one for you and your Dunstan,' said Ralph to his brother.

'Well, but about France,' said

Philip. 'Go on; begin at the beginning if you like, for I'm all in a muddle about it.'

Pauline did not speak at once. She felt too weak and indifferent to be annoyed by Philip's teasing questions; and she lay against her cushion, gazing out past those three dark heads into 'the golden remote wild west,' her mind busy, as far as it could be, with wonder at the change in herself, the advance into age and experience, which had made a wider and deeper gulf between her and her dear old companions than could ever divide them from 'those younger ones.' She was so strangely independent of them now. Nothing they could do or say made any difference to her. What did it matter if the boys were pleased or discontented, if Kitty was good or unmanageable? They and their humours were no longer her world, but only accidents of every day. Even till she went to France she and they had had no secrets from each other; but now she knew something that they did not know, and that she only hoped they might never learn so sadly. Those three children, thinking themselves so clever and worldly-wise, with their perfect confidence in themselves and in each other—how childish, how ignorant they were! Pauline looked at them now from another region. They could hardly be unconscious of this; but they put down the change to her illness, which no doubt accounted for the outward signs of it. She had fancied once or twice that Ralph suspected something, though he only showed it by snubbing Kitty and Philip when they chattered too inconsiderately; but Ralph was too dignified to show any curiosity: and after all there was enough of trouble, outward and visible, to account for the quiet

sadness of Pauline's recovery. And she loved these young creatures with all her heart, more even than in the old bright days. Their strength and honesty, their affection and tenderness for her, made a clear sweet atmosphere to rest and grow strong in. If only they would not ask questions!

'I don't want to talk about France,' she said at last very gently; 'the thought of it stifles me somehow, it makes my head feel dizzy. I would rather hear about your plans, if you don't mind. Speak, Ralph; tell me about them.'

'With the greatest pleasure,' said Ralph, his face brightening. 'The facts are saddish; but it all depends on how you take them. We have agreed that it is a grand thing to work for one's living. When my own hand keeps my head,' shaking his fist in the air, 'I shall feel equal to a king. What's more degrading than to be an idle fellow at school, cramming for useless exams. ? while a clerk in an office is a man, and a free man too, though he's only an infant of seventeen, like Philip Mowbray. Besides, he gets pay and feeds himself. Pay is the grand object in this world. Do nothing without being paid. If I were you, I'd make Aunt Lucia pay me for watering her flowers.'

'Ralph talks as if he was the most mercenary wretch in the world,' said Kitty. 'One of these days he'll break our vow; I know he will.'

'What vow?' said Pauline.

'Have you forgotten it? Don't you remember how we all six swore last summer never to marry for money, and that the one who did should be cut by the other five?'

'Ah, last year; but then we were drones,' said Ralph. 'It's a different thing now. I believe

we said we would never marry any one richer than ourselves. We had better cancel that vow, or make it over again with conditions.'

'O Ralph, that would be weak!' cried Kitty. 'If that's your grand independence—'

'Shut up; I'm talking to Polly. Well, you know my ideas on the subject of pay.'

'I don't want your ideas,' said Pauline. 'I want the facts, do you see! I want to know what is really going to happen to us all. I am quite strong enough now to bear anything; but mother always changes the subject.'

'You are a soft creature; we're all tender about you,' said Kitty affectionately.

Ralph silenced her and went on. Though he was generally silent, he could talk very well when he chose, and was fond of explaining things. When he looked up seriously and opened his mouth to speak, the others listened with deference; for Ralph was their leader still, though he had ceased to be King Arthur or Lancelot, and though the idea of their fellowship was quite republican.

The facts were 'saddish,' as he said. Pauline found that she knew them all pretty well already. Dear old Cleeve Lodge was to be given up at Michaelmas, and Mr. and Mrs. Mowbray were to move to a little house near London, where he meant to employ himself in writing for papers and magazines. It was not unlikely that he would succeed, if he had perseverance enough, for he knew a good many editors and literary people. The great French book was already begun; for George Mowbray was quite able to detach his mind from the many troubles which were weighing so heavily on his wife; and he had already

sketched out two novels, each of which could be finished off in a few months, and was certain to bring in three or four hundred pounds at least. Only two things really troubled him: that his boys must leave school, give up college, and take clerkships in a London merchant's office, where the principal was a friend of his brother John; and that Aunt Lucia had immediately insisted on taking Pauline to live with her. If it had not been for his wife's earnest persuasions, he would have refused this last offer; and now Pauline herself was beginning to wish that it had not been accepted; but when the thing was decided, for Aunt Lucia was impatient, she had been too weak to care at all what became of her.

As might be expected, Mrs. Mowbray was the person who suffered most from these changes, though she bore them bravely, and saw the wisdom or even necessity of them all. She was losing so much, poor woman—her pretty home, her good servants, her dear eldest child; and she knew very well that George and the children would not understand that life in the little new house could not be so free, or easy, or comfortable as at Cleve. They would depend on her for everything, as they had always done, and would expect all sorts of things that she would have no means of getting. There were lines in Mrs. Mowbray's face, and her hair was beginning to turn gray. All these things weighed upon her as she nursed Pauline through the illness that seized her directly they were at home. She did not think kindly of M. de Maulévrier; for though she knew nothing of that last scene, she had an uneasy knowledge that he had troubled Pauline a good deal;

and as she watched the faded looks of her beautiful child, the purple stains under her eyes, the heavy lids, the transparent skin, the thin tired-looking hands, the slow weary indifference with which she seemed to be returning from the weakness of the fever, she felt it would be both mad and wrong to refuse her to Aunt Lucia, who had the power and the will to do everything for her.

'If it had not been for all this we would never have done it,' she said to her husband. 'But we must think of the child, not of ourselves.'

'You may be wise, but I believe you are wrong,' he answered. 'However, I don't oppose. You and Aunt Lucia together are too much for me. But she will be bored to death. She will want to come and help me with my books, and I shall never get on without her.'

'You must both make up your minds; it is your share of the trouble,' Mrs. Mowbray said sadly. 'I know this; it is the child's only chance of getting well.'

'When she is well, we'll have her back again,' said George more cheerfully.

Ralph talked to his sister at some length about the prospects of the family. He was not quite sure that she heard all he said, for she never looked at him, except once or twice when the others roused her by clapping their hands in approval of some of his remarks. The wonderful glory of the sky, which had now spread itself over all this side of the world, was some excuse for her wandering eyes and thoughts; and Ralph, though he admired his own eloquence much more, was not inclined to be hard on Pauline just now.

faded
Presently two more figures approached from the house, coming slowly up from the fir-wood into the great light on the cliff's brow.

'Father and Ben Dunstan,' announced Philip; and Ralph immediately stopped his discourse, getting up and sauntering away from the group, a lanky black figure against the sky.

'How are you, my Polly?' said Mr. Mowbray.

'Better, papa, thank you, and very happy,' she answered, smiling; and she stretched out her hand to Mr. Dunstan, smiling at him too.

Ben looked as solemn as a judge, for to him this was a great moment. He had not seen her since the day they brought her home, perhaps six weeks ago, when she fainted several times on the journey, and talked nonsense in the train, when her father and mother, half distracted with trouble already, were so overwhelmed that he had to take the whole management of things on himself.

Mrs. Mowbray had perceived then what a nurse he was, and several times since had tried to thank him; but Ben regarded thanks as a refined kind of insult, and on these occasions always walked away at once.

Mr. Mowbray had talked so cheerfully of Pauline's recovery that Ben came up the hill expecting to find her quite herself, and had hard work to hide the shock it gave him to see her wasted looks. He sat down on a stone, not speaking to anybody, and began pulling up bits of wild thyme; but, after a moment, Pauline turned her face to him again.

'Tell me a little about Aunt Lucia,' she said.

'She is as young and beautiful as ever,' said Ben gravely. 'I mean it, Kitty; you needn't mock.'

'Well done! I am glad to hear you stand up for her,' said Mr. Mowbray. 'One supposes Frenchwomen to be so graceful, and piquante, and so on. I admire them very much, but I did not see one who equalled Aunt Lucia; did you, Polly?'

'Not Madame de Coigny, papa, or Madame de Loches?' said Pauline softly.

'Well, they were much younger, but most certainly they had not Aunt Lucia's refinement.'

'Yes,' said Mr. Dunstan rather eagerly, 'that refinement is her charm. It is something so perfect, you feel you can trust it through and through. She's made of that pure white silver, not strong enough to make things of, but unalloyed and beautiful.'

'Aunt Lucia *would* be conceited, if she heard you!' exclaimed Kitty, staring in amazement. 'Why, you are quite romantic about her, I declare!'

'Such a sky as this might inspire one, mightn't it?' said Ben, looking up and around; 'though not, it seems, with anything better than humbug and flattery.'

'Don't spoil your pretty speeches,' said Pauline very low.

Ben looked at her and fell into silence. He was angry and unhappy, grieved to his heart at the sight of her, ashamed of having drawn down her gentle reproof on his cynicism. Yet there was a sweet haunting happiness at the root of things. She was better, she was pleased to see him, she noticed what he said, even if she did not like it, and a golden future was very near in which she would be living at Croome, and he might see her every day. There he sat, frowning, and with his strong fingers rooting up the wild thyme diligently.

'Who were those two people you mentioned just now?' said

Philip to his father. 'Madame Somebody—who was she? I wish you would tell us something about them. The fact is, you know, we've heard nothing about France at all.'

'Haven't you? then it is time you did,' said Mr. Mowbray. 'I'll spin you a yarn now, and Polly can correct my mistakes.'

Ralph came back and fell into his place in the circle. The yarn began and went on prosperously; but, after about ten minutes of Tourlyon with Maulévrier in the near distance, Ben Dunstan's watchful eyes saw that Pauline, who had flushed a little at first, was growing paler and paler. She perhaps felt that he was watching her, for presently she looked towards him and moved her lips, which were very white. Her sister and brother saw nothing, absorbed in their father's well-told story. Ben got up quietly and came close to her; she looked straight up into his face, with eyes full of a strange agony, and whispered,

'I am so cold. I think I ought to go in.'

'Ralph, come here,' said Ben Dunstan. 'Your sister is going back to the house. You and I can carry her.'

Of course the interest in Mr. Mowbray's story gave place at once to eager alarm; they had tired her, she had caught cold; but Pauline shook her head and smiled at them.

'Don't come,' she said. 'Go on telling them, papa. Mr. Dunstan and Ralph will take care of me.'

They helped her into her chair and carried her down the face of the hill, where the glory was beginning to fade now, through the twilight of the pines, down to the old home and to her mother. The hand she gave Ben, when she wished him good-night, was as

cold as ice; but she gave him a smile too, and the poor fellow went back to Croome more hopelessly in love than ever.

CHAPTER XX.

THE SQUARE MAN.

MISS LUCIA MOWBRAY, in spite of her talk about hating foreigners and their customs, was, in her light unpractical way, as eager a matchmaker as any Frenchwoman. She had never done much business of this kind, it is true, but it was a form of activity which had always attracted her; for she flattered herself that she saw very far into people's characters, and knew their suitability to each other a great deal better than they did themselves. There was not generally much prudence in her pet ideas, but now and then she hit on something which struck her as both spiritually and worldly wise; and then, when she had no misgivings to torment her, she stuck to it, and worked at it heroically. Of this kind was her favourite scheme at present—a match between Ben Dunstan and Pauline Mowbray.

Her great liking for Ben seemed in most ways unaccountable, but Miss Mowbray's fancies were generally that: one can only suppose that she liked him because he was such an entire contrast to herself. Perhaps, too, knowing herself to be weak and flighty, she enjoyed the feeling of reliance on any one so solid. There may also have been something in the relationship, and in Ben's being the only representative of her mother's family, the old people at Croome: anyhow, she seemed to cling to Ben more and more as the months went on, and

he showed more and more restlessness.

He had really been very troublesome that summer. He was always abusing Croome and its poor stupid people, always talking about 'a shameful waste of strength;' corresponding with tiresome old parishioners at Forest Moor, who wanted him back again; refusing to care for novel-reading, or tennis, or flowers, or animals, or any of the decent occupations of a country parson. Science and manufactures, and political economy and smoke; shaking hands with groups of grimy colliers on the pit-bank; going down to take his share of their life in black stifling regions underground — these were the dreams with which he entertained himself—and Miss Mowbray, when she would listen to him. He was indeed the square man in the round hole; he had no room for his angles; the soft roundnesses of nature and life at Croome were to him horrible provocations; the civil tones and ways of the people irritated him; nothing kept him there except a liking for his old cousin, as strong as hers for him, but very seldom expressed as the young Mowbrays heard it that evening on the cliff.

Miss Mowbray had been in real fear of losing him several times that summer, but lately she had been easier in her mind; she had found the secret of keeping his heart in the south by a stronger attraction than her own. Sending him off to France, to carry the bad news to the Mowbrays, had been a fine stroke of policy: their trouble, the journey home with them, Pauline's illness, the hundred things that could be done to help them, seemed to have roused to life all the most civilised feelings in

Ben's nature. In the latter part of that summer he gave up talking about Forest Moor, and Miss Mowbray flattered herself that she had chained him effectually to Croome by having Pauline to live with her. There was no hurry about anything further, she thought: the girl was not yet really strong, and had the variability of spirits, though she tried to hide it from her aunt, which naturally followed on such an illness. Besides, poor child, her father's losses, the breaking up of her home, were hard things to get over. When she was quite herself again, in beauty and brightness, it would be time enough for Aunt Lucia's delightful plan of removing her to the rectory: in the mean while her pale looks kept up Ben's interest and anxiety, the very best state of mind for him.

Miss Mowbray had a long large garden at Croome Court, closed in with old red walls covered with ripening fruit, entered by an archway that was now a glowing mass of crimson Virginia creeper. From this gate a broad walk ran along the whole length of the garden: there were espaliered fruit-trees two or three yards from each side of the walk, and in front of them lower espaliers of clematis or honeysuckle or climbing roses. There were plenty of late roses out now in September, to mix with the crowds of sweet bright flowers that grew in the long borders next the walk. In the middle of the garden the walk divided itself for a few yards, and there was a pool and a fountain always playing, with a bench near it on a patch of grass, under the shade of an old rugged mulberry-tree. Here in the garden Miss Mowbray spent a great deal of her time, especially at this season of the year,

when the flowers were drawing near the end of their lovely lives, and seemed more sweet and brilliant than ever with a touch of autumn in the air.

She went about with a large pair of scissors, snipping off dead leaves and blossoms, or filling her basket with flowers for the house; sometimes she would seize a spud and make an attack on a small weed or two which had escaped the gardener's eyes. But she was not fond of weeding, as some people are; in spite of her passion for flowers she had no satisfaction in destroying their poorer neighbours. She was not sure that a dandelion or a thistle did not enjoy its life as much as a rose.

She and Ben Dunstan had had many talks, strolling up and down that long broad walk together. He came and found her there one morning in September, having had a message that she wished to see him. Pauline, who was now living at Croome, saw the two figures from her window as they paced backwards and forwards in the garden.

'I wanted to tell you,' said Miss Mowbray to her cousin, 'that I have finally made up my mind.'

'What about?' said Ben.

'About the future.'

'It's more than most people have,' muttered Ben; on which Miss Mowbray lifted her eyes in astonishment.

'What do you mean, my friend?'

'The future. What do you mean?'

'I mean the future of Croome Court, and all my belongings, after I am dead.'

'O, I see! That is not such a puzzling future. Well, I am glad you have made up your mind.'

'Not so puzzling, is it? Then tell me what I am going to do.'

I must warn you, though, that however disagreeable you may make yourself, I shall not change my mind. I have thought about it a great deal lately—for I really am growing old, though I can't manage to feel so—and I have seriously considered what my duty is, and I'm going to do it.'

'You can't speak fairer than that!' said Ben, with a north-country twang and an odd smile.

'Understand that I am not asking your advice or your opinion. Mr. Johnson is coming this afternoon to make my will, and neither he nor I mean to be biassed by anybody. You will please to keep your distance, and I shall send Pauline out of the way too. I think, at the same time, that you had better know what I am doing: not Pauline; there is no occasion to tell her. Now you see I am perfectly resolute, so you may guess, if you like, what I have determined upon.'

'I shall guess what seems right to me.'

'Very well—as you please; you will probably guess wrong. You and I never agree in anything.'

Ben was silent for a minute: at last he said, 'I told you long ago that I thought it would be unfair to leave it all to one girl.'

'You did, sir; but I suppose you don't think so now?'

'Yes, I do; why should I have changed? I have not changed in anything. I feel just the same as I did then.'

'Only more so. Very well; don't alarm yourself. I shall not leave it all to one girl.'

'Either divide it amongst them, or leave everything to her father. He wants it, poor fellow, and you ought to consider that—think of the boys.'

'What is the use of all this?'

asked Miss Mowbray calmly. 'I told you I had made up my mind, and did not wish for any advice. Keep your place, if you please. I know George's wants as well as you do, and I perceive that other people feel for him and his boys. Pray can you tell me how it happens that Philip is staying at school after all?'

'I could tell you, but it is a secret, and therefore I shall not,' Ben replied, while, for once in his life, he coloured crimson and looked away from her laughing eyes.

'No, don't; secrets ought to be kept,' said Miss Mowbray. 'Well, do you think George knows how to spend money? Wouldn't it all go into the publishers' pockets, instead of doing his children any good?'

'His wife would take care of that.'

'I shall not trouble her with that care. As you won't help me by guessing, I must tell you. I mean to leave George five thousand pounds, for I like him, though he is a goose; and three thousand to Pauline, as she can't live with me for ever. The rest, the house and all, I shall leave.'

'Three thousand won't make much of an income for her,' grumbled Ben.

'She can dress on it. I don't suppose she need do anything more; at least, that depends on you. Everything else I leave to you, though your rude interruptions don't deserve it. Ah yes, I knew you would be furious, but I tell you I am doing my duty.'

After this there was a silence of some minutes, till Ben said very abruptly, 'I don't follow you. I don't know what you mean about your duty.'

'No, I did not learn it from you. But now let us be reasonable; I am tired of all this spar-

ring. The fact is, I respect my ancestors, and I should like the place to go back to the old name. I have not forgotten your ill-conditioned speeches one day in the summer—about selling it and going away. I think it possible you may not be as bad as your word; still, your bad intentions don't alter my feeling about it; and I think when you are a little older you may be a little wiser. At any rate, the responsibility will be yours, not mine. My plan for you is to have Croome, and live here, and to marry my dear child Pauline. Then I shall have done my best for you both; do you understand?'

'And if she won't have me?' said Ben, with a grim smile. 'Do you think it likely, after all those splendid Frenchmen—'

'Pauline is not quite a fool, I hope,' said Miss Mowbray sharply. 'Very well; if she won't have you she must make the best of her three thousand pounds, and, unless she marries somebody else, I shall keep her as long as I live. But I think you had better lose no time, for you can quite well afford to marry as you are.'

'Yes, if I am to marry at all, I certainly shall not wait for Croome,' said Ben. 'I hope I may not have it for a hundred years. There's no hurry, however. She is getting stronger and brighter every day, and she had better not be bothered just at present. Only I beg you won't tell her of these kind intentions of yours, for I prefer standing on my own merits.'

'Do you think she would marry you for the prospect of Croome? You are either very modest or very mercenary,' said Miss Mowbray, smiling. 'No, she is a better girl than that. But I told you before that I meant to say nothing to her; I don't

care to talk of my affairs to everybody. You, of course, are different; I like you to know that you will be my heir; and I think, perhaps, in spite of yourself, you will take more interest in the place for knowing it. It is a relief to my mind to have this settled, though you are, without exception, the most ungracious man I ever met.'

'Well, you know,' said Ben, 'I'm made of stiffish clay, and the fact has hardly penetrated to my brain yet. To-morrow, when I have thought it over, perhaps I'll write you a letter. But, seriously, I still hope that you will change your mind; for if—if she won't, you see, I don't suppose I shall

ever marry at all, and then it would be quite thrown away on me. Couldn't you put off this affair for a few months?'

'No, my friend; life is uncertain. I must do it this afternoon. And it is not Pauline I think of so much as you. She is sure to marry somebody; but if you two marry it will be a very happy fulfilment of all my wishes.'

Ben walked along, looking gravely on the ground. It was a solemn moment, and as he thought the thing over, words seemed gradually to fail him. At last he said, 'Thank you;' and Miss Mowbray gave a little laugh of satisfaction.

[*To be continued.*]

THE MAKESHIFT COLT.

A Tale of the Derby.

No, I never gamble. I don't profess a pious horror of it, or anything of that sort, you know, but I simply object to it as a waste of time, money, and temper. Not that I won't have sixpence on the rub, with threepenny points, or so, just to give an interest to one's whist; and not that I won't put a crown on a horse, or take a ticket in a sociable sweepstake. But that's mere amusement; I never bet or gamble in earnest.

Why don't I? Well, for a very simple reason. I once all but made a grand *coup*; I once came within the cock of a horse's ear of pulling off a very big thing—and I didn't.

What do you say? Funk! No, sir, I call it common sense. I had a chance such as a man rarely gets more than once in his life, and Fortune didn't favour me. I have reasoned it out since, and come to the conclusion that the odds against a gambler are heavier even than any one supposes. I believe that I should never have such another chance as that; and, upon the whole, it doesn't seem to me to be worth while to gamble now. I am satisfied that I am not a lucky hand in that way.

However, you shall hear the tale. Not that it's much of a story, either; but you say you would like to hear the account of my life. And this one bit of mine is really the most important incident, I think, in my whole career. For, had it gone otherwise—But there! you shall judge for yourself.

Seeing me now what I am, a flourishing tradesman in Auckland, New Zealand, you would hardly imagine how I began life. I have taken root here and prospered; I have a wife and family, as you see, and am a comfortable man. Yet only a very few years ago my case was widely different.

Ah, yes! Eighteen seventy-two; Cremorne's year. It's a queer thing to look back on those times. Only a short ten years ago, and yet I am quite a different man.

I was a gentleman in those days, if you please, although as poor as a rat; an artist to boot, that being one of the well-known lucrative professions that needy gentlemen are so fond of adopting.

I don't say that I had much faith in my own genius. Youthful and verdant as I was then, I knew better than that. But an artist's life seemed an agreeable one to me, and I was sanguine enough to suppose that I could earn a living at it, as a copyist and producer of pot-boilers. That was about all I looked forward to.

I dwelt in Camden Town, London, in a studio high up at the top of a house that stood in anything but pretentious street. I was practically alone in the world. For, though I had relations, I saw or knew but little of them. Being poor, and an artist, I was naturally a Bohemian, and my associates were mostly drawn from that heterogeneous stratum of society.

I was poor, as I have said, but I was not so indigent as some

of my friends and acquaintances were. In their opinion, indeed, I was far too well off to thoroughly comprehend the luxuries of poverty; for I used to receive an occasional ten-pound note from one of my relatives, who, though he grumbled at my uselessness, yet always sent me that sum whenever I was so pushed as to bring myself to apply to him.

Besides that, I could earn money. There was a picture-dealer who used to give me an occasional job, to make a copy or the like. And then there were certain pawnbrokers I was aware of, who would advance sums on such pictures as I brought them. O yes! that used to be a regular system then, and I daresay it is now.

This is the way of it: you paint a picture and take it to the artistic 'uncle.' He lends you on it a certain price, which he fixes according to the size of the picture, and with small relation to its subject or execution. If you think proper, of course, you can redeem the picture any time within a year, or you could take a possible purchaser to view it at the shop. At the expiration of the year it becomes 'uncle's' property.

Lots of us used to find that these pawnbrokers were our only patrons. They lent us a price on our paintings that, deducting the cost of materials, would leave us what might be reckoned a shilling an hour or so for our own work. And that work, as you may suppose, was far from being our best; yet with our best we could do no better.

We pawned our pot-boilers, without a thought of ever 'taking them out' again. In due course they passed irrevocably into 'uncle's' possession. What he did with them then we neither knew nor cared.

Among the men I used to meet about in the studios, or consort with in the bar-parlour of the Brush and Palette of an evening, were many whose sole means of livelihood appeared to be painting for the pawnbrokers. I had another resource, as I have mentioned—that picture-dealer out of whom I used to make wages pretty frequently. And then there was that relative of mine, who, though he considered me to be an idle good-for-nothing, would not let me go wrong for want of a ten-pound note.

I was a sort of Croesus among these out-at-elbows daubers then. They drank and smoked and ate very frequently at my expense, in the free happy style of Bohemia; and they also often 'borrowed' shillings and half-crowns, with the careless *bonhomie* of their guild. They made much of me, and tickled my youthful vanity by pretending to take it for granted that personal talent with the brush was the real source of my comparative affluence.

I had no business to call myself poor, for I had, from the various sources, a total income of over two hundred a year. Then I had a good capital, in the shape of a fair stock of such things as a young artist requires, an extensive wardrobe, some furniture and books. I was comfortable enough in my humble studio, which also was my living-room, with a small bedroom adjoining it. There was no reason why I should have felt poverty, but I did.

Like most inexperienced youngsters, I had but the vaguest ideas of the value of money. Moreover, I was extravagant, never stinting my expenditure, and wasting a lot more money than I could afford at the Brush and Palette, and similar places. I was always in arrears, and, worst of all, I fell

into a sad way of betting on races.

Now, goody - goody people would say that such a thing was impossible and incomprehensible ; but I swear to you that what led me to take to betting and gambling with more than ordinary zeal was the purest and holiest incentive man could have.

A woman, of course, you say. Well, yes, but a girl rather than a woman she was then. Lucy was the daughter of a small tradesman, a druggist, in Camden Town. I had made her acquaintance in some informal way, and had gradually wormed myself into the confidence of the family. I was madly in love with Lucy, who—well, I won't attempt to describe her, for certain reasons not far off us just now. Suffice it she was, like Traddles' Sophy, 'the dearest girl in the world.'

Many visits to the little household, and various little trips to Richmond or Epping Forest, play-going, and what not in her company, had the usual result. I told Lucy of my love, and she consented to become my wife.

Now, had I been free from debt, there was really no reason why we should not have married at once. I had as much as many a curate marries upon. But then I *was* in debt ; I had duns and difficulties, no present means of making my domicile fit for a wife, and, above all, my little income was somewhat precarious. Then I had no particular prospects to look forward to.

Lucy's father, like most men of his class in London, particularly if blessed with a large family, as he was, hardly said either yea or nay to the matter. He allowed us to judge for ourselves. I was a gentleman, he said—meaning thereby an honest man—and meant to act straight by his girl ;

so what more was there for him to say ?

Well, by the spring of 1872 our engagement had continued for some months, and I was daily getting more deeply involved by reason of my pursuit of luck. I betted on every event, hoping to pull myself up that way, but only with the result of throwing away the best part of what I earned.

Things were in this state shortly before the Derby. I was going on in a bad way. I knew that something must be done before long. I knew that I must carve out a new path for myself somehow ; that I must contrive some fresh plan, or go without Lucy, and also go to universal smash. Yet what to do I did not know. I waited, in a hopelessly hopeful condition, for something to turn up. I put trouble and worry away from me, and would have none of it.

Do you not know that curious dreamy condition you get into sometimes, when you refuse to allow yourself to think of the future ? You live in a kind of unreal reality, to use a paradoxical expression. The present you make to occupy your thoughts entirely. You wait for the unexpected.

Well, that was my case then. I was as gay as ever. I made merry with my friends as usual, and talked to my Lucy—God forgive me !—as if I were coming into ten thousand a year the next week. Meanwhile, I threw off daub after daub, until even my accommodating 'uncle' looked suspicious and hesitating, and nearly all the resulting cash was put on horses whose names had been mysteriously confided to me as those of certain winners.

I was not very heavily booked for the Derby, as it happened, not having much available cash, and

having intended to put 'something on' on the day before the race. An uncomfortable assurance was with me of impending trouble. I felt that the crisis of my fortunes was close at hand.

However, before anything unpleasant occurred, an unexpected something turned up. It came in the person of my friend Mr. James O'Hooligan.

Jimmy O'Hooligan was a boisterous Irishman, very well known in the Bohemia of London at that time. He was a middle-aged man, of somewhat handsome appearance, and carrying himself with a military air. He possessed a glib tongue, an amazing fund of anecdote, had a musical voice and ear, and all the social advantages of one who has kissed the Stone of Blarney. Need I add that Jimmy was extremely popular with both the ladies and gentlemen of his acquaintance?

He got his living in one of those mysterious ways common to Bohemia. Sometimes he sat as a model in the studios of such artists as could afford the luxury. In this way he may have earned a good deal at times—for models are often very well paid—and he has figured in many a character on the walls of Burlington House.

Jimmy seemed to be known by everybody. He hung about newspaper offices, particularly those of a sporting character. He was admitted behind the scenes of theatres. He was on the free-list at every music-hall. He knew every prominent member of 'the fancy' and the P.R., and all over London he was hailed as a cherished friend by publicans and barmaids.

These characteristics threw a romantic halo over Jimmy, to my young and somewhat verdant mind. Moreover, he was the life and soul of every party he got

among, though a rather vulgar, coarse, and disreputable soul, it must be admitted. But he was a frequent visitor to the studios of Camden Town, and was quite one of our free-and-easy fraternity.

It was the Monday morning before the Derby, that race, as every one knows, being run upon a Wednesday. I was sitting in my studio at work, knocking off one of those thin experiments in colour which took but a day to complete, and upon which 'uncle' would advance me fifteen shillings or a pound, half of that being profit or earnings to me, the balance covering cost of canvas, colours, and frame. In the midst of my work there entered to me the O'Hooligan.

Evidently something was in the wind; Jimmy's entrance was dramatically impressive. Cautiously projecting his head and shoulders through the half-opened doorway, he asked,

'Are ye alone?'

I was, and said so. Then he slid slowly into the room, like a snake, holding the door as closely as was compatible with the passage of his body. Once inside, he quickly closed the door, and locked it; then he turned and faced me, standing still, with his back against the door, and summoning into his face a look of intense excitement. He seemed to be labouring under the pressure of some tremendous secret, which was struggling to force its way out of him.

Suddenly he crossed the room towards me with long slow strides, and on tiptoe, holding up a warning finger the while, and literally gleaming on me with fixed meaning eyes. Laying his hands on my shoulders, he whispered hoarsely,

'Our fortune's made!'

Then he stood back and eyed me.

'O, indeed!' I said, for I knew

Jimmy. 'Another straight tip, I suppose?'

'Another!' he shrieked. 'THE straight tip, me bhoy! The straightest that ivver—there! eighties to wan! a hundred to wan! and sartin as the fate av sinners!'

I struggled desperately against the contagion of Jimmy's manner, for I knew by experience what it all meant. I said,

'Look here, old man, I've had about enough of your tips. They never come off, you know!'

'Ah now, see here! Ye've been *playin'* at bettin'—no more. I gave ye tips, 'tis true, and they didn't come off. That's partly the reason why I'm givin' ye this, to make up for thim others. I'm in arnest this time!'

He was, apparently. His eyes were dancing and glittering in his head, his hands demonstrating, and his whole person indicative of eagerness. He could hardly speak, so strong was his agitation. I began to feel the excitement extending to myself, and knew that I was destined to give way to it.

'See now,' he continued, 'I've surprised wan av the deadeest saycret av the Turf, wan av the biggest things that's ivver been. I tell ye we could make our far-tunes if we'd ownly enough to put on. It's a plant that's just goin' to make this Derby the most astoundin' wan ivver run!'

'No! It don't matther how I got it. I can't tell even you that. But I sid to meself, ye've got to keep this thing dark. There's just wan chum ye're goin' to take in wid yer. Him an' you's goin' in on this thing, an' goin' to do the biggest shtroke that ivver ye'll git the chance of yer whole lives! I've *put* on ivery blessed penny I'm worth, an' here I am, me bhoy!'

It was no use trying to keep calm. His excitement mastered me, and I felt that, come weal or woe, I had to do as he wished. He went on:

'Whisper now—it's a solemn sacred saycret between us two, remimber that! Did ye ivver hear av the Makeshift Colt? No, ye didn't, nor nobody else. But I tell ye, that's the horse that's goin' to win this year's Derby.

'O, ye needn't look at the lists; he's not in the bettin' at all—not *yit*, anyway. They've held that coul't back, an' kept 'm as dark's the back of Hades. An' now, thim as is in the saycret, they're goin' round takin' the odds on the quiet.

'There's no one knows a word av it outside the stable, barrin' me an' you. The bookmakers'll just give anny odds at all about the horse; they don't know his name *yit*, even!'

And so on, and so on, till, after an hour's talk, I was as completely persuaded as any one could wish, and yielded myself up entirely to the fever of which O'Hooligan was the present exponent. I soon saw that he was thoroughly in earnest himself, and it was not long before I was as mad on the subject as he. I saw that I had got a means, at last, for relieving myself of my difficulties, providing myself with actual capital, and for making my marriage with Lucy an immediate possibility.

'Sell ivery blessed stick! Sweep out the whole bag o' tricks! Paawn the coat aff yer back! An' crack the bilin' on to the Makeshift Colt!' was Jimmy's advice.

I found on inquiry that I had, curiously enough, drawn 'the field' in a big sweepstakes at the Brush and Palette. As the Makeshift Colt was a name unknown to the lists, it had not been put among those drawn, and conse-

quently it belonged to me as holder of 'the field' ticket.

'That's yours, thin, anyway,' said Jimmy, referring to the sweep. I accepted this drawing, for my own part, as an omen of success. I was thoroughly with Jimmy now.

I had little enough money; but I quickly sold or pawned every available article that I owned, even going so far as to raise money upon the few bits of furniture and studio effects that I had. I made up a purse of about forty sovereigns, which really represented every stick or rag in my possession, except what I stood upright in.

Then my Irish monitor and myself proceeded to visit certain bookmakers. A remark that the first of them made to us was substantially repeated by the rest.

'Never heard of your fancy till this morning. Gave a hundred against him to one or two parties that came to get on him. Had to look up the *Guide* to see if there was such a horse at all. But can't give quite the long price again. Make it eighties to one for you.'

I put on thirty pounds at these odds, and I also 'placed' the colt at fifteen to one, putting on seven pounds in that way. Jimmy was enraptured; for if the colt carried off the event I should win 2500*l.*—a mint of money in our eyes. He himself had put on all he could raise—how much exactly I do not know.

'It's a foine time we'll be havin' presently,' he said. 'Won't the boys open their eyes whan you an' me shows our pile? An' see fwhat a base of operations we'll have! Be the mother av Moses, we'll be millionaires yit! Good luck to the colt!'

I confess I had my misgivings, although the gambling fever had

come over me and impelled me to risk my little all upon this horse. To me it was a grand *coup* indeed. It meant so much, you see; for either I should come out an actual capitalist, possessor of a sum that to me seemed almost boundless wealth—'a base of operations,' as Jimmy called it—or I should be completely and utterly broken.

You may imagine the state of mind I was in—at one moment seeing a simply golden prospect before me, anon seized with the dimmallest doubts and fears. And the following day my excitement grew hotter yet; for in all the papers the Makeshift Colt was now, for the first time, quoted in the betting; and apparently he had come into favour, as the price against him had fallen to forties to one. Still more reassuring was the fact that two sporting papers gave the Makeshift Colt as one of their three probable winners. The secret was a secret no longer.

I now got into a wild delirious ecstasy of expectation. You can well imagine how I felt. I went so far as to telegraph to that relative of mine, alleging that I was in want and had sore need of his help. I also borrowed some five pounds here and there, and 'cracked it on' with the rest.

My relative evidently smelt a rat, however. He was a man of the world, as the phrase goes, and had a low opinion of me, which I am now open to confess was not wholly unwarranted. He wired in reply:

'Believe you want to bet on Derby. Will send ten pounds, but not until Saturday morning, when expect it.'

However, on showing his telegram to the landlord of the Brush and Palette, that worthy publican readily advanced me the ten pounds. I thus 'sold' my kind relative, you will observe, through

the instrumentality of the general guide, philosopher, and friend of good Bohemians.

At last came the eventful morning, and Jimmy and I found ourselves in a brake with some dozen others, driving from our 'pub' down to Epsom. I need not say that I had put on the bulk of my ten pounds, getting forty to one, and eight to one for a 'shop.' A long price still; but the colt had not come into general favour much, and, indeed, actually started at little below those odds.

Ah! I don't think I shall ever forget that day. No, sir! The fearful agitation I was in has impressed every detail of it indelibly on my memory. Consider. I stood to win three thousand pounds, which meant to me a wife, a home, substance, comfort, respectability, a business. On the other hand, a black abyss of woe seemed to open to my imagination.

We stood on the hill opposite the Grand Stand, and watched the preparations for the race. Jimmy the boisterous had suddenly quieted down into a grim, white-faced, eager-eyed, silent spectator. I was so agitated that I had to lie on the turf. My head swam round, my heart palpitated forcibly, I shook all over as if I had a palsy.

Among the mass of horses marshalling into rank for the start we had eyes but for one. Among the many hues of their jockeys' silks we sought out the colours that signified our particular choice. Purple and black—there they were; and we gazed at them feverishly, for the noble animal that bore them carried also all our hopes and fears.

They are off! The race has begun, and the decision of my fate is at hand. I see the brilliant bed of colours stream past and

away, I hear the intense murmur of the crowd, and I stand, as a gambler stands, awaiting the cast of the die.

O my God! how it all comes back to me, though ten eventful years have passed since that day! Surely such a terrible agitation of mind as shook me then is madness—madness, neither more nor less.

The field comes sweeping round 'the Corner,' tailed off into extended line; and down the hill towards home come the horses, in one last tremendous effort. A jockey, whose colours are scarlet and yellow, bright and vivid, leads the way, working with bit and spur and whip, and seeming to carry his steed on beneath him. Two others are close behind; but their colours are strange to my straining eyes.

Great Heavens! Where is the Makeshift Colt? Where is the racer to whom I have pinned my faith? As the foremost horses come in sight I hear the tremendous frenzied roar that bursts up from the mighty concourse of spectators. For a moment my heart seems to stop beating. It is death to me to hear that shout:

'Cremorne! Cremorne! Cremorne wins!'

But no! Out from the ruck of horses behind, just as they come down from Tattenham Corner, one draws to the front—a dark horse, brown or black, ridden by a jockey in colours that are a heaven of hope to my sight. O! on, Black and Purple! On, Makeshift Colt!

The dark horse forges ahead, passes the two behind the foremost, lies on the flank of Red and Yellow. Even in all my terrible excitement I notice a dropping in the roars of the mighty crowd, a sort of falter or

perplexity—for few know what horse Black and Purple rides. I hear a man near me hoarsely exclaim,

‘What the—— horse is that?’

I know, and I leap up in a mad thrill of delight. As the striving racers flash before us, I see two far in front of all the rest. Red and Yellow is doing all he knows, but, on his flank, drawing up to him closer and closer, nearer and nearer, forging ahead till they ride neck and neck, comes my noble Black and Purple. He is coming up! he is passing Red and Yellow! He is gaining a foot in every yard! He wins! he wins! Black and Purple for ever!

The race is over. The fierce turmoil of shouting thousands boils up around us. The two horses have passed the post so close together that no one knows which has won. We wait some moments in agonised suspense, till the numbers go up upon the board. At last they appear: 1, Cremorne; 2, Makeshift Colt; 3, I know not what, for I sink almost fainting on the ground.

Half a neck has done it. Had our horse put on the spurt a moment sooner he would have won. Had the course been ten yards longer the decision would have been reversed. O, if—if—if— And I have lost!

O’Hooligan is beside me. He stands with his hands thrust down deep into his pockets, his face is pale, and his lips set together; he gazes vacantly into the distance.

‘Shot in the back again!’ he murmurs hoarsely, with an oath. ‘Come on, me boy! Rouse yer-self! Come an’ let’s liquor, anyway!’

I crawl dejectedly after him to the tent, for my mouth is as dry as a limeburner’s wig.

Well, that event was the turning point in my life. That bad luck has been the making of me. I will tell you how in as few words as possible.

I awoke the next morning in the most utterly depressed and dispirited condition. I had a racking headache, of course, for, equally of course, I had got most consumedly drunk after the race. Perhaps that was natural under the circumstances. Mind and body were in torture. I felt gloomy enough to do something dreadful. I was utterly ruined; I had no prospects; everything I had possessed was mine no longer. I had not even the means left to earn my subsistence with. In a day or two more my very bed would be seized, and I should be turned into the street.

My mind was a little confused, you see. I had totally forgotten one thing, and it was lucky I had, perhaps. Not until late in the day did I remember that I had backed the Makeshift Colt for a place. So overwhelming was my misery at losing the 3000*l.* I had reckoned on, and losing it by such a narrow squeak, that I had clean forgotten the saving bet.

I had turned into the Brush and Palette moodily to seek what solace I might find there. Suddenly some sovereigns were thrust into my hand, and I was told the money was the second prize in the sweepstakes, wherein I had drawn ‘the field,’ as you may remember.

Ah, it was a fine revulsion of feeling I then experienced! I cheered up wonderfully when I recollected how I really stood. Things were by no means so black as I had thought. As a matter of fact, I had actually won over a hundred pounds.

That drove me back from the drink just in time. More, it led

me to reflect. I conceived a disgust at gambling and betting from that time, and I resolved never to take to the same courses again.

I believe it was the luckiest thing in the world that the horse I backed was beaten by Cremorne. If it had won, and I had landed that big prize, I should have been a confirmed gambler all my days. Of that I am certain. I should have come to eventual smash, when there was no possibility of recovering from it. And, likely as not, I should have dragged my poor Lucy into the mire with me.

That very day after the Derby, as I was reading the accounts in the paper of how the great race had so nearly been carried off by the rankest of rank outsiders, my eyes lit upon an advertisement. It was a call for emigrants to go out to New Zealand.

That decided me. I had a hundred pounds in hand, and with it I resolved to emigrate. I resolved to throw gentility to the winds, to quit the dangerous Bohemia of London, to give up my foolish dreams of an artistic profession, and to try what manful industry might do for me at the Antipodes. I resolved to conquer my own failings, to concentrate my energies, and to seek fortune in a new land.

Within a month I had bidden a hopeful *au revoir* to Lucy, had been the recipient of a farewell supper at the Brush and Palette, and was an 'assisted emigrant' in the steerage of the good ship Rangitiki, bound for Auckland.

Of course I had hardish times at first. Who hasn't? Chopping firewood, mending and making roads, carrying a hod, driving cattle—these were some of my occupations; and little enough could I earn at them. But by

and by my old profession stood me in good service.

One day I accidentally overheard an hotelkeeper stating his wish to have a signboard on his house. He lamented his inability to find a man who could paint it properly, and said he would willingly stand five pounds for what he wanted. I offered to do the job, if materials were found me, and, after some demur, I was allowed to try my hand speculatively.

Before I had finished the sign the satisfied 'boss' commissioned me to decorate his saloon. Orders came in upon me thick and fast for similar work, and I soon found myself earning six or eight pounds every week.

Well, to make a long story short, within a few months I was foreman of a house-fitting firm in the city, and, before a year was gone, I was a partner in the concern and doing a thriving business. In three years from the time of my leaving England I was able to send money home to Lucy. The dear girl came out at once, and is now my wife.

I have prospered amazingly. At home I could never have been more than a picture-dealer's hack. Here I hold no inconsiderable position in the city, my business as a house-decorator having gone ahead, and absorbed into it various kindred branches of trade.

Perhaps I cannot call myself a gentleman any longer. On the other hand, I am not a broken-down Bohemian. Look at my family, sir, at my prosperity! Look at this shop of mine in Queen-street, and say, have I not cause to be thankful that the Makeshift Colt did *not* win the Derby?

That's my story.

'GOLDEN GIRLS.'

A Picture-Gallery.

BY ALAN MUIR, AUTHOR OF 'CHILDREN'S CHILDREN,' 'LADY BEAUTY ;
OR CHARMING TO HER LATEST DAY,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

BY FAR THE BEST CHAPTER OF
THE NOVEL.

THE reader of this romance will have observed that in the more recondite passages I draw him aside from the bustling thoroughfare of the story, and in an episodic paragraph, a kind of corner of conversation, explain the drift of what is going on. This I hold to be the first duty of a conscientious historian, and I have already counted up five passages, replete with valuable significations, which I believe the whole body of my readers would have passed by without noticing anything particular, had I not pulled them by the sleeve. Indeed I have remarked that all profound penmen—especially my dear friends the philosophers—are at the greatest pains, on all proper occasions, to remind their readers of the depth and height of their researches ; from which it is evident that the mass of men need to be perpetually nudged, lest they mistake profundity for mere commonplace, or even pooh-pooh it as nonsense. Slaving as I do night and day to produce didactic results, I should be heartbroken if my students should lose benefits which I have so laboured to secure. At the same time this method of conversing with readers may sometimes become inconvenient when a novel, by the

sheer force of its merit, rises to great popularity. For instance, in my last section I pointed out that by a patient study of this story of 'Golden Girls' any active man of tolerable character may secure for himself an heiress. But because I thus openly and without any collusion put all the marrying men of the three kingdoms in this enviable position, it by no means follows that I am bound to correspond directly with upwards of a hundred students, who state particular cases, in which they are vitally concerned, and ask for special advice. For example : A gentleman has had three successive fortunes left him, of fifty thousand pounds each. These fortunes he has found insufficient for the liberal style of living which he feels it due to himself and friends to maintain. He is now giving his affections to a young lady worth one hundred thousand pounds. This gentleman may perhaps expect me to tell him how to win his heiress by the end of next week. On my part I may feel the hardship of his case. When such a man has to confess that if things go much farther he will not be able to play his whist for more than five-shilling points, I may be quite ready to admit that matters should be looked into. But let this gentleman consider. Suppose that other readers of *London Society* are seeking the hand of that same

young lady, and are taking in the magazine as a strategic guide; how shall I appear among men of honour, if I privately convey special instructions to one particular party? I hope this may serve as a delicate hint to the entire class of correspondents above described; and I will pursue the subject no farther, except to say to the gentleman from Tipperary that (under the painful circumstances he mentions) I will not forbid him to use his horse-whip. This reply is directed to a case of a unique description, and—without divulging any secrets—I seriously and frankly declare that I have put this correspondent in no position of unfair advantage over the mass of my students. But to avoid all suspicion or subsequent murmurings, I now announce that under no circumstances whatever will I hereafter notice, directly or indirectly, any communications upon this subject. All that I have to teach shall be conveyed in the course of the story, in the form of spectacular instruction or philosophic meditation, and I dismiss my readers with a special caution—addressed to the whole body without favour or partiality—that whenever they think the writing more than commonly dull they will be—as a matter of precaution—on their guard and read attentively. *Ece signum*. Thereabout will be treasure.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN WHICH MRS. MARMADUKE DOBBIN AND DR. JEREMY JUBILEE TALK TO EACH OTHER ACROSS THE STREET.

FOUR-AND-TWENTY coaches dashing through a small town day by day make a pretty stir. Four-and-

twenty bugles heard blowing before the machine turns the corner with a bend and a swing; four-and-twenty clattering runs up the street; four-and-twenty loads of cold or hungry or thirsty passengers brought to a standstill in front of the Cock and Crown; four-and-twenty starts with fresh horses; all this keeps a street lively. Never a half-hour went by from dawn to dark that the tidy little town of Tickenham was not in this way enlivened by twenty travellers going the eastward or westward way; and the inns flourished, and the shops flourished, and the doctor flourished, and the lawyer flourished, and everything flourished through some mysterious connection with these four-and-twenty coaches that were coming and going all the day long, with their sounding bugles and smoking horses.

Yes, but that was fifty years ago. Long since the railway came. As new stations were opened here and there in the neighbourhood coach after coach began to drop off. The iron horses were careering along under dykes, over embankments, through tunnels; and the passengers were gazing out at earthen cuttings or flat fields; or they were shrinking within themselves as the train rushed into the black hillside with a shriek.

Gone were the days of spinning along the smooth high-road with horn and cracking whip, of running up steep inclines, and fleeting down again on the other side, of watching the various landscape change at the rate of ten miles an hour, of peering into the roadside cottage-door, or trying, through the trees, to catch a glimpse of the great house in the heart of the well-wooded acres. All was gone of the old coaching days, and Tickenham sadly felt the change,

and showed what it felt from end to end of its long dull street. A loaded wagon was now a kind of event; a carriage and pair brought people to the windows; and from year's end to year's end not a solitary coach turned the familiar corner, or drew up at the familiar door.

For all that, Tickenham had still a substantial and even a comfortable look. Moneyed folks must be about somewhere. There was a branch bank at Tickenham; there was a saddler's, where the leather was fresh-coloured, and the brass and steel bright, and the whip-handles and lashes that stood in the doorway clean and new, all denoting bustling trade. There was a wine-merchant's, whose very door and window-blinds had a way of letting you know that in the cellars lay nutty sherries and tawny ports. There was a book-seller's, and a draper's, and a constabulary station, and a fine old church; and altogether Tickenham looked not unlike a family that has seen better days and experienced heavy losses, but is still able to show a comfortable front to the world.

Right in the middle of the long wide street, within a stone's-throw of the church, and close by the wine-merchant's shop, there stood facing each other, on opposite sides of the way, two large comfortable country-town mansions which, in that long street with its average houses, seemed rather like two aristocratic personages in a gathering of nobodies. These houses were of great frontage, and had numbers of windows with small panes of glass; and for the rest they were dull respectable brick, unadorned.

It was exactly a quarter to one o'clock in the day, and on the doorsteps of these two mansions a lady and a gentleman were

standing engaged in animated conversation.

The gentleman was short and moderately stout, with a face full of odd wrinkles where jokes and whims might be lying in wait to spring out during conversation. He had two bead-black eyes and a short-cropped moustache, and his suit was the oddest ever made. His trousers were large and of a tubular shape, not coming near his ankles. His coat was very short, as if towards its completion the materials had run short, and the original design had been abandoned for that of a jacket, which yet retained symptoms of a coat. The little gentleman wore a monstrous black necktie, with a huge bow which would be always working round under his left ear, causing him to shift and fidget his head this way and that; and he was covered by a great hat roughened with age and neglect. He carried a large oak stick, upon which he leaned as he spoke; or he used it to enliven his talk, waving it about.

Opposite to him on the other side of the road stood a lady of remarkable stature and imposing appearance. She was of red and jovial visage, as if she liked good things; and her silver hair, parted on one side, was set off by her high complexion. She was richly dressed in brown silk, and she may have been walking in her garden, or just returned from some neighbourly call, for she wore no mantle, and her ample bonnet-strings did not hide her heavy gold chain and appendages, which seemed to be worth a little fortune. She too carried a stick, but it was a handsome Malacca cane with a handle of horn and gold, and added not a little to the dignity of her appearance.

'Mrs. Marmaduke!' cried the gentleman at sight of her, striking

the ground with his stick. 'I cannot believe my eyes. Mrs. Marmaduke—madam! you ought not to be out of your bed!'

'Nevertheless, here I am,' replied Mrs. Marmaduke, in a deep voice, and with a slow utterance, while her eyes darted humour. 'Here I am, and here I stay, Dr. Jubilee.'

'You will do yourself harm, madam,' Dr. Jubilee called out. 'You will do yourself harm. Listen to me, madam. As sure as my name is Jeremy Jubilee you will do yourself no little harm. I repeat it, madam,' the Doctor continued. 'I stake my professional reputation upon the statement: you will do yourself a world of harm.'

'Do not be afraid, Doctor,' the lady answered, in the same deep steady voice, which amidst all its sound of solemnity was quizzical. 'I am pleasing myself, and what we like always does us good.'

'What is that you say, madam?' asked Dr. Jubilee, bristling up in affectation of great alarm. 'Repeat that last sentence, if you please.'

'What we like,' repeated Mrs. Marmaduke, throwing a tragic note into her noble voice, 'never does us harm.'

'The like of that,' exclaimed Dr. Jubilee, 'anything *like* the like of that I never heard. Why, madam, since the days of Galen the whole science of medicine has been based on one grand truth: that what you like never does you good. Here, madam, is the entire philosophy of our healing art: mankind by doing what they like catch what they do not like. We administer what mankind does not like, and get them back to the state they do like.'

'That is medicine, is it?' asked Mrs. Marmaduke, with derision. 'Topsy-turvy stuff, Doctor, say I.'

'That is medicine,' Dr. Jubilee replied stoutly. 'You forget that you patients are topsy-turvy to begin with. Port-wine, turtle-soup, shell-fish, white meats, red meats, hot rooms, late hours, thin shoes, low dresses: that is what mankind and womankind like. Pills, powders, blisters, lancets, cuppings, flannel, and the bedroom: that is what mankind and womankind do not like. Medicine, madam, is a single combat—a duel between like and dislike. If people would make up their minds to eat nothing and drink nothing and do nothing but what they dislike, why, we should all live to be one hundred and one, Mrs. Marmaduke.'

'And merry lives too!' cried Mrs. Marmaduke. 'But, Doctor, I have friends coming to stay with me this afternoon, and must make ready. So good-morning.'

'I have a young friend coming to me too,' the Doctor said, with great importance. 'And, concerning this young friend, I have something to tell you.'

'In that case you had better step over to luncheon,' said Mrs. Marmaduke. 'We can talk across the table better than across the street.'

'No luncheon for me!' the Doctor cried. 'You ought to know me better. I can step over, and watch you overloading your system, madam, and digging for yourself an early grave.'

'If I am ever to dig an early grave for myself,' cried Mrs. Marmaduke, 'I must be very quick about it. But step across, Dr. Dislike, and lunch with Lady Like; and you can tell me your news.'

CHAPTER XXIX.

IN WHICH THEY CONTINUE THE
DIALOGUE ACROSS THE TABLE.

'MRS. MARMADUKE,' as she was familiarly styled, was the widow of Marmaduke Dobbin, a merchant who had spent his closing years in Tickenham, and who, from his frank and hearty nature, became a general favourite. 'Marmaduke' he had been called by his intimates; and as time went on another brother settled in the place, whose name was Jack. This second Dobbin, by a less reverential friendship, was styled 'Jacky.' In order to distinguish the brothers, each was commonly denoted by his Christian name, and 'Mr. Marmaduke' and 'Mr. Jacky' became household words in Tickenham. By and by the wife of Marmaduke Dobbin, Esq., came to be known as 'Mrs. Marmaduke;' and after her husband's death she let it be understood that she rather wished the title to be continued; and so she came to be known as 'Mrs. Marmaduke' for all time.

Mrs. Marmaduke led the way into her dining-room, where a substantial luncheon was spread, at sight of which Dr. Jubilee lifted up his eyes and his hands, and groaned aloud.

'You need not eat,' cried Mrs. Marmaduke, throwing her bonnet on the sofa. 'You can look at me—'

'Poisoning yourself,' added Dr. Jubilee.

'Slowly,' Mrs. Marmaduke rejoined, thus finishing the sentence. 'I have been sixty-five years trying to manage it.'

'Have you ever heard of a pitcher that went to the well a hundred times,' remarked the Doctor, 'and got broken at last, Mrs. Marmaduke?'

'I have,' retorted Mrs. Marma-

duke, who was helping herself to cold beef. 'There was a pair of pitchers, and the other one stood on the shelf all the time, and got broken first—Dr. Jubilee?'

'Well, madam,' the Doctor said, falling into his formal vein after this exchange of wit, 'so you are about to entertain visitors.'

'Did you not say—will you reach me the cucumber?—that you had a young person coming to you?' replied Mrs. Marmaduke; 'and you were going to tell me about him or her, were you not? Not *her*, I 'suppose,' added Mrs. Marmaduke, laughing—'not any young person going to take the situation of Mrs. Jubilee.'

'The only young person who shall ever take that situation,' said the Doctor, rising from his seat, and making a low bow, in which his tubular trousers and little cock-tailed coat played most extraordinary parts—'the only person (I swear it!) is—'

'A lady who likes her four meals a day,' retorted Mrs. Marmaduke briskly—'a lady who will never marry a starvation apothecary, who would give her a plain breakfast at eight in the morning, and nothing more until eight at night, unless she managed to slip a crust into her watch-pocket without being seen.'

'When you apply to me the epithet of starvation apothecary,' cried Dr. Jubilee, with an admirable air of exasperation which would have deceived any stranger, 'you compound an obnoxious adjective with a defamatory substantive, and make a slanderous exhibition of the whole. I wish you a very good morning, Mrs. Marmaduke.'

'You have wished me a very good morning already,' remarked Mrs. Marmaduke coolly. 'Now, Doctor, who is the young person?'

'An assistant, madam,' the Doctor replied—'a professional assistant.'

'An assistant!' exclaimed Mrs. Marmaduke, now fairly surprised. 'What do you want an assistant for? He shall not attend me—not on any account. Why can you not go on doing your own business as you have always done?'

'I am growing old, madam.'

'Fudge!' cried Mrs. Marmaduke, tossing her head impatiently.

'And to be particular with you, madam, and to state the local symptoms,' continued Dr. Jubilee, 'my knee-joints are getting stiff.'

'Double fudge!' cried Mrs. Marmaduke; 'you cure your patients with your knee-joints, do you?'

'I am not going to admit you to any professional secrets, madam,' replied Dr. Jubilee, with perfect gravity. 'Cure them how I may, I am going to have help; and I have chosen a young fellow who has just passed his examination. His name is Alexander—Sholto Alexander—a Scotchman, I suppose; but they are an honest people, Mrs. Marmaduke, and do not eat too much, like us English.'

'Because they have not got it to eat,' remarked Mrs. Marmaduke. 'I wish you would hand me that tart when you see me stretching across the table.'

In spite of this rebuke, she did not seem very intent upon her meal; indeed, her manner was restless and preoccupied, even in her witty sallies.

'I like this lad,' continued Dr. Jubilee. 'I saw him in London and talked with him, and there was an open way with him that took my fancy. I asked him had he always been steady, and he looked me straight in the face and said he had not. I liked that

immensely, Mrs. Marmaduke. And when the young fellow said to me right out that he was resolved never to do anything again that he could be ashamed of, something in his manner brought the water to my eyes.'

'Is he good-looking?' asked Mrs. Marmaduke, who seemed herself to be interested in the young man. 'Not too good-looking, I hope, or the girls will be making a fool of him.'

'I am not so sure of that,' replied Dr. Jubilee. 'You must know we got very friendly and confidential, and the young fellow told me that his grand idea in life was to be a great London doctor. A great London doctor, Mrs. Marmaduke!' Dr. Jubilee repeated the words with humorous solemnity. 'Now, I like ambition in a young fellow; but I must say if he wants to be a great London doctor he is hardly wise in coming down to Tickenham, and taking the shabby end of old Jeremy Jubilee's practice.'

'Everybody must begin somewhere,' replied Mrs. Marmaduke. 'He will have a kind friend in this old Jeremy Jubilee!'

'The young fellow told me also,' continued the Doctor, gliding over this compliment, 'that he has given his heart away—hopelessly, he says; but he will never love anybody else.' (Here the Doctor put his hand to his mouth, affecting to cover a laugh.) 'Now I suppose, Mrs. Marmaduke, that when a young fellow says he has given his heart away hopelessly, he means that there is no money at present. But time mends that, Mrs. Marmaduke, and hard work; and I do not object to a young fellow being engaged to a young woman, even if his heart is hopelessly given away. It keeps him out of evil,

madam. It carries him through the most dangerous years of life with high thoughts in his mind. O, so long as a young fellow does not mix himself up with women he does not honour, and cannot honour, I have good hope of him. I often wish I could think as I thought at one-and-twenty, when I was in love too, Mrs. Marmaduke, though you may not think it now. That love kept me straight, madam; but nothing else ever came of it.'

The sun had been shining in through the window, but at this instant a cloud obscured its beams, and the room grew dark, and the faces of Dr. Jubilee and Mrs. Marmaduke were for a moment overcast as well.

CHAPTER XXX.

IN WHICH MRS MARMADUKE RELATES AN ANECDOTE ABOUT MAJOR SANCTUARY, AND MAJOR SANCTUARY RELATES AN ANECDOTE ABOUT HIMSELF.

PRESENTLY out shone the sun again.

'Now, madam,' cried the Doctor, 'you have had my story. And I suppose, madam—I presume—I will even say I earnestly hope—that by this time you have finished your meal, and are prepared to make a fair return of confidence. You have visitors coming, too?'

'Some time this afternoon,' replied Mrs. Marmaduke. 'Only that schoolgirl you have seen here several times.'

'You mean the great man's niece?' inquired Dr. Jubilee.

'Victoria Sanctuary—yes,' answered Mrs. Marmaduke. 'But the rare event to-day is that her father is coming with her. I expect them in an hour's time.'

As Mrs. Marmaduke said this, there appeared in her manner a certain excitement which she could not repress. Perhaps, indeed, this very excitement had in some measure produced her recent gaiety, which, whether Dr. Jubilee saw it or not, had been somewhat feverish.

'The celebrated Major Sanctuary!' exclaimed Dr. Jubilee, in the voice of a footman announcing a guest. 'Major Sanctuary, K.C.B.—in his own estimation.'

'Victoria is a pleasing girl,' Mrs. Marmaduke remarked, resting her chin on her hand, and speaking in a retrospective way. 'I picked her up a year or two ago, and she often comes to see me, as you know. There is a simplicity about her, and a freshness, which take my fancy; and she has not got to the worldly age—yet. She will soon be worldly enough, I fear, with her poverty, and her father's instructions.'

'Comical father,' remarked Dr. Jubilee. 'Talking man. Fine hand at telling stories, ain't he?'

'Dear, dear, the flight of time!' continued the old lady, still speaking in her reminiscent fashion. 'I can tell you a secret, Doctor. Nearly forty years ago Major Sanctuary was in love with me, and wanted to marry me. I have never seen him since. But I took a fancy to his daughter for old times' sake.'

'If Major Sanctuary was in love with you forty years ago, madam,' said Dr. Jubilee, 'I want to know how he got out of love. I should say that forty years ago that must have been a very difficult thing for a young fellow to accomplish.'

'Money, Doctor, money!' Mrs. Marmaduke said, breaking into a sad smile which made her very handsome. 'Money has worked

greater wonders than that. I was the only daughter of a doctor, and my mother was dead. My father had a large and wealthy practice. Everybody believed that I would be very rich at his death, and the man who is now Major Sanctuary fell in what he called love with me. He proposed, and I accepted him. Indeed, I was very fond of him. Before we were married, my father died; and died, not wealthy, but so deep in debt that nothing remained after his creditors were satisfied. How he had spent his money we never knew. He may have incurred liabilities before his practice rose; and certainly he had the reasonable expectation of ten more years of money-making. But what matters all that now? I was left penniless, and the day after my father's funeral my lover called upon me.'

'It was a fine opportunity,' exclaimed old Dr. Jubilee, quite dropping all his oddity of manner, and speaking in a solemn voice; 'it was a very grand opportunity!'

'I told him everything,' the old lady continued, sighing deeply. 'I well remember holding out my hand with ten sovereigns in it, and saying to him, "See, there is my fortune;" and then I released him from his engagement, and told him he was free.'

'And he,' the Doctor asked breathlessly—'he vowed that he considered himself bound as never before—as never before?'

'No, Doctor, he thanked me, said he wished me well, praised my prudence, and went away.'

'Hiss!' the Doctor cried, like a playgoer, 'hiss, hiss, hiss!'

'And I walked back into the room,' said Mrs. Marmaduke, 'and I came and stood beside the fireplace, looking into the gray ashes, and my heart was broken—my heart was broken!'

She paused. The garrulous little Doctor appeared not quite able to find his tongue; for after making one or two attempts at speech, he seemed to judge silence more prudent.

'He set out for India. I went as governess to Brussels; there, after years of toiling, I met the man who became my husband. He was thirty years older than I, good and kind, and when he offered me a home, he did it so gently that he won my heart. All the rest you know. Seven years after I was left a widow, rich and childless. I am quite sure that Major Sanctuary has never recognised me under my new name; probably he never heard of my marriage. And I am equally sure that in this tall, stout, white-haired old woman he will never recognise the girl he once—*loved!*'

'If he were to recognise her, madam,' said Dr. Jubilee, severely, 'I should think his appetite for dinner would be spoiled. Perhaps not, though,' the Doctor added, shaking his head; 'hard heart and good stomach, I daresay. Pretend to sigh—gulp down a glass—and then cut into your roast beef. An appetite with a sharp edge, and a knife with a sharp edge, and a conscience with no edge at all!'

'Not so bad as that, I hope,' replied Mrs. Marmaduke gently. 'After all, Doctor, the best of us are not good, and perhaps the worst are not bad. I have heard a great deal about him, little as he has heard of me. I believe he loves his daughter. I rather imagine he makes great sacrifices to bring her up well. He must be poor, Doctor—he must be very poor—and certainly he is kind to his girl.'

While the dialogue proceeded in this way the sound of wheels was heard, and immediately a

carriage drew up at the door, upon which Mrs. Marmaduke, who became greatly agitated, said that her visitors were at hand. She had not expected them, she declared, greatly fluttered, for another hour. The Doctor, observing her discomposure, and possibly thinking that his presence might help her to go through a trying scene, resolved to wait it out. There may have been infused into this kindly intention some tincture of curiosity. No doubt the Doctor was wishful to see how the great Major, as he called him, would figure in the interview.

The great Major figured much as usual. Victoria, who was a quiet modest girl, pretty and plainly dressed, went up to her patroness and kissed her.

'How pale you look!' the girl remarked. 'You must have been tiring yourself. Some of your parish works, I know.'

'Not that, dear; a headache—a headache,' the old lady answered hastily. Then, with what was to Victoria a most unaccountable gasp, 'Major Sanctuary, I am glad to see you. *From your daughter*—I—I seem to know you quite well already!'

The Major behaved himself with good breeding and with perfect unconsciousness, and no sooner had he got through the complimentary part of the ceremony than his characteristic manner began to appear. He walked with his grandiose step across the room, and then, turning upon Mrs. Marmaduke:

'Seem to know me already! Faith, ma'am, I am not hard to know. A plain, straightforward, "how-do-you-do" sort of a man, that does his duty, and has a knack of spending his five-pound notes too fast. There you have me from head to foot.'

Mrs. Marmaduke smiled. Dr.

Jubilee's round eyes were a sight worth travelling from London to see.

'But I have to thank you, Mrs. Dobbin,' the Major said, becoming natural once more. 'You have been very kind to my daughter. Don't say you have not, Mrs. Dobbin; she has told me all, ma'am. She has told me every word.'

'Victoria is a pleasant companion,' the old lady said, taking the girl's hand. 'She makes this dull old house bright, with her pretty face and her pretty dresses and her pleasant ways.'

'Ah, you should have seen the mother!' the Major went on, with great vivacity; 'the mother you positively should have seen!'

'Why did you start, dear?' Victoria asked, in a low voice.

'Nothing, nothing; I am a little cold with being out in the garden. Now, Major, you were saying—'

'I was saying, the mother, ma'am,' the Major replied, in his most animated style. 'There was a woman! A woman likely to have a daughter to be proud of. Golden hair—threads of gold, I assure you; and a great many golden sovereigns, as well as the golden hair! Eyes as blue—O, far bluer than any sky; except, perhaps, Naples. To avoid exaggeration I except the Neapolitan sky. Fine figure; general attractiveness. Piano—indescribable! Languages—a kind of centipede with the tongue, I assure you. Harp—well, I had better not describe it. You may be sure, ma'am, that when that woman was sweet eighteen there would be no lack of suitors. To be perfectly candid with you, I did not think my chance a good one. But one night, at a ball, ma'am, where she had been persecuted—I may safely say persecuted—by two or three

score of men—every man of them looking after her money; not a grain of sentiment in any one of the fellows, ma'am, I pledge you my word—well, that night she stole out into the garden, for cool air, I presume. I followed. I found her sitting in an arbour. The scene was perfectly Byronian. Rosy bower, tender moonlight, and the girl looking quite entrancing. Most men would have begun to spout, ma'am, and would have talked poetry. Not I. I walked straight into the arbour, with my head erect. "My gracious!" cries the girl, "what is this?" Most men would have called out, "Don't be frightened," caught her hand; all that sort of thing. I did nothing of the kind. I stood before her as calm as I am this moment, and said I, "*Wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband?*" I said "*this man*" emphatically, you will remark, to distinguish myself from the other fellows: "*Wilt thou have THIS MAN to be thy wedded husband?*" And what do you think followed? A faint? A scream? A rush into the house? Not a bit of it! She looked up, and just as if she had been following the parson, "*I will*," she said. We were married that day week!

During the progress of this remarkable anecdote, Victoria seemed to grow more and more uncomfortable; but Mrs. Marmaduke recovered her spirits. Dr. Jubilee listened with an ironical attention so subtle that it quite captivated the Major, who was pleased to have found such an earnest hearer. The upshot was that the Major grew very complimentary to the Doctor, and the Doctor in return offered to show the Major the wonders of Tickenham that very afternoon.

CHAPTER XXXI.

IN WHICH FACT TELLS ONE STORY AND FICTION ANOTHER, AND THE STORY OF FICTION IS STRANGER THAN THE STORY OF FACT.

FOR wonders there were, even in Tickenham. At the close of last century, when the drinking of natural waters was in fashion, and foreign spas were not easily accessible, some wise man of Tickenham remarked that in the suburbs of the town there was a curious spring, from which a sluggish strange-coloured stream trickled, wandering lazily over the adjacent fields, and leaving an unpleasant deposit in its course. This wise man ran home for a breakfast-cup, and having, with difficulty, secured a few tablespoonfuls of the water, he tasted, found it nasty, and at once concluded that it must be wholesome. The water was pronounced to be medicine—Nature's medicine! In a few months' time great stories were told of cures effected by a new water, at a small town called Tickenham. Popular attention was aroused; mighty hopes began to pulsate in the breasts of those of the Tickenham folk who had land near the spring. Plans were put on paper; a grand walk was made and planted with trees; a pump-room was erected, with a little gallery for the band to play in, and all the rest of it. Local people who knew everything declared that Buxton, Harrogate, Tunbridge Wells, and even Bath, must soon give place to Tickenham with its wonderful water.

When Nature had done so much, and man had cooperated with Nature so cleverly, it was reasonable to expect that Tickenham would grow prosperous. Tickenham never did. Somehow, from the time the pump-room was erected, the fame of the

waters declined. For one desponding summer a band played, tunes chiefly of a pensive character; but nobody walked the promenade or flirted under the trees, except the folk of Tickenham themselves; and the vacant pump-room and untrodden promenade remained, testifying the vanity of human hopes and the failure of Tickenham waters.

But in Tickenham waters one man still professed faith: this was Dr. Jubilee. He averred that the waters were unsurpassable for 'general debility;' and the Doctor, who was a man of endless whim, also declared that a course of the waters was a sure remedy for corpulence. Without any manner of doubt he had produced some very marked effects on stout ladies, but whether by the virtue of the Tickenham waters readers may judge, when I have described how the Doctor treated his obese invalids.

When he entered the room where one of his stout lady-patients sat waiting for him, his invariable practice was to start and hold up his hands.

'Excuse me, madam, if any expression of surprise escaped me,' he would then say, with his old-fashioned formal politeness; 'I was struck, madam, by the remarkable grace of your features, and—if you will pardon my saying it—your matchless bust!'

The patient generally would excuse the Doctor, thinking his ways odd and provincial, but not disagreeable when you made allowance for him.

'One thing only is wanted, madam,' Dr. Jubilee would continue; 'if we could just get a little off here'—he would pass his fingers slowly round his chin—the face would be perfection. And, as a farther suggestion, if we could just cut down a little'

—here he would put his hands to his chest like one going through a calisthenic exercise—'why, madam, there would not be such another bust in the county!'

Hereupon the patient invariably expressed willingness to follow the Doctor's prescriptions in all things. The Doctor would choose lodgings exactly one mile from the pump-room, and order the patient to drink a glass four times a day, walking out and home. Then he would draw up in a spirit of perfect exultation—for he was really happy whenever he could lower a patient's diet—a starvation regimen. He would assert that, for the due operation of the cure, the patient must live almost entirely on dry toast and lemon-juice; and by a rigorous pursuit of his method, both in food and exercise, the patients were in a short time reduced in bulk; and all the credit was given by the Doctor to the wonderful Tickenham waters. Occasionally, however, he would let fall some syllables in praise of his own private plan. As on the present occasion.

'Why, sir,' said the Doctor, who had been retailing his method to the Major as they walked along—the Major for once listening like a man outdone by the Doctor's remarkable stories—'why does the female sex live longer than the male? Chances, beforehand, seem against 'em—smaller lung, weaker brain, general structural inferiority; yet they last us out. Why, sir? Simply, sir, because women think of their appearance, and live so as not to grow stout or ugly; and when the face and figure are well, all the rest will be well too. There is the whole secret, sir. Female vanity lengthens female life.'

After this philosophical excursion, Dr. Jubilee returned to the subject of Tickenham waters, and

detailed such a string of cures that the Major was quite dumbfounded, not being used to hear wonders from other lips than his own. Somehow the Major could not cap the Doctor, and had to listen silently. At last Dr. Jubilee, stopping in the road, put his hands under the little cocktails of his coat, and spoke as follows :

'Why, sir, I assure you I sent home a mother last year, and her own child—five years of age—did not know her mamma, so much was she changed. Now, sir,' asked the little Doctor, flirting the coat-tails in the air with his fingers, 'is not that the most remarkable thing you ever heard of?'

'Not quite,' answered Major Sanctuary, who seemed at the moment to catch an idea. 'I can match it with a story of my own.'

The Doctor stood opposite the Major challenging him, and the Major raised his cane in the air and began :

'My friend Lady Dolly—no, on reflection I had better not give the name, as I am almost one of the family. E—normous woman, sir. She was born stout. As a school-girl she was like a girl made of pincushions. When she grew up, she was so round and so pretty that, I pledge you my word, sir, we called her the Celestial Globe ! When she married and settled down, she had to have a special door made to her carriage. And with it all, sir, *the sweetest, the loveliest, the most benignant temper, sir, that you ever knew.* Very good. A friend told her of Plympton, who has made his name by pulling people down, and she put herself in Plympton's hands. He sent her into the country and dieted her. Her husband being in the House of Commons could not stay with her.

Well, sir, the treatment succeeded, and down her ladyship came, about one pound a day. But the remarkable thing was that as she got thinner her temper got bad, and got worse, until at last she was a perfect virago, and weighed seven stuns one pound, and the ounces I forget. Plympton pronounced her cured, and she was sent home. The night she arrived her husband was in the House making a fiery speech. When he came home he asks his butler—old family servant—if her ladyship had returned. "No, sir," the man said, "but an impostor came here *as my lady* ; and when I said it was no such a thing, she grew that violent in the hall that we had to send for the police." If you will believe me, sir, the baronet had to go to the police-station, and there he found his wife in a terrific paroxysm of fury, and two officers sitting up with her to prevent her committing suicide !

This astounding anecdote silenced little Dr. Jubilee, and the Major resumed his walk with the air of a man who has recovered his reputation by a decided stroke.

But these disused waters of Tickenham, and even this conversation between the Major and the Doctor, were destined to give a turn to the lives of our Golden Girls. For when Dr. Jubilee began to speak of the waters as a remedy in debility Major Sanctuary, always on the look-out for subjects in talk, and especially for marvels, made a note of what he heard, and mentally resolved, at some future day, to bring it out in company. He did so. When and in what form shall be hereafter recorded. Not that what the Major said was, in itself, interesting, but because it became a motive-power in the history. Indeed, the Major brought the Golden Girls to this very town of

Tickenham, whence there followed events which shall in time be written and read.

CHAPTER XXXII.

IN WHICH AN OLD COUNTRY DOCTOR
TELLS A YOUNG COUNTRY DOCTOR
WHAT HE MUST EXPECT.

MAJOR SANCTUARY at last bade the Doctor good-bye, and the Doctor, with pondering face, stood in the street, doubtful which way he should go. He decided at last, and, walking rapidly past the post-office, turned into a small by-street, where, stopping before a small house, he knocked at the door. The door was ornamented with a very bright new plate, on which was engraved 'DR. ALEXANDER.' This plate the Doctor regarded with a quizzical face until the door was opened, when, learning that Dr. Alexander was not at home, but that 'Mrs. Alexander' was to be seen, he stepped into the passage, and sent in his name.

The passage was furnished plainly with old and adapted furniture, the oilcloth having evidently been refitted from another house. But all was scrupulously neat, which Dr. Jubilee noted with a practical and gratified air. Presently the servant showed him into a room where Mrs. Alexander was busy shortening the cords of a picture which was to be hung upon the walls. Dr. Jubilee, a man sprung from the people himself, had a quick eye for marks of rank, and was never deceived; and the moment the widow advanced to meet him something in her manner told him that this faded and poorly-dressed woman was what he used to call in his own vernacular 'quite the lady.' So the Doctor put on his finest

manners, and bowed so very formally and low that the little tails of his coat were, for several seconds, exactly in a horizontal line with the back of his head. Mrs. Alexander could not repress a smile at the comical figure before her, and, though she tried to melt the smile of ridicule into the smile of welcome, the quick-eyed Doctor saw she was laughing at him. This did not the least disconcert him. In fact he rather enjoyed it.

'Madam,' the Doctor began, in his most high-flown style, 'I am happy to see you have chosen so suitable a residence. A southern aspect is always to be desired, and you will find this street at once central and retired.'

'It is a small house,' Mrs. Alexander said; 'but I think it better for my son to begin quietly. Indeed he must do so.'

'Madam,' the Doctor said again, 'you are wise. The plague of our profession nowadays is that all our young fellows try to cut a dash. They must have a great house, smart furniture, spicy window-blinds, and a brass knocker big enough for a monkey to sit upon. They must have one horse, two horses, three horses, before there are patients enough to pay for a pair of reins. What follows, madam? *Debt!* Millstone round the neck. And when the man at last rises to something like practice there is the debt behind gnawing away at his tardy profits; and when the celebrated Dr. This-or-That dies, after a few years of good practice, people are amazed to find that Mrs. This-or-That is left destitute, and that the daughters must go out as governesses. Madness, madam, madness! Let a man be honest, and say, "When I get enough patients to drive a carriage I will drive one; not before." Shanks's mare was the only steed Dr.

Jeremy Jubilee rode for twenty years, madam. O, here you come, sir! I have just been praising your house.'

Sholto Alexander was now a fine young man. In a physical sense he had always promised well, but he had grown unexpectedly handsome. Broad-chested, with well-hung arms, and a high colour, he looked rather more like a riding, rowing, racing young fellow than a successful medical student; and one would have expected his feats to be in the cricket or hunting field rather than in the examination-room. For all that, Sholto was not only a successful but a hard student, and his teachers predicted great things of him. There was a certain shyness about the young fellow, a tendency in the fine high colour to deepen a little when he was spoken to, which became him vastly; and there was besides remarkable sweetness in his smile. On the whole, he looked the sort of man who would be likely to wear the Victoria Cross some day. Strong, fearless, soft-hearted, as almost every truly brave man must be, but with plenty of the lion in him, such was the young fellow who had come as assistant to old Dr. Jeremy Jubilee.

Probably at this moment old Dr. Jeremy Jubilee wondered to think so. He regarded Sholto for a long time with evident admiration; but the Doctor's way was to express his admiration in a kind of cynical banter, unless his innate good-nature fairly got the better of him, which happened several times a day.

'Well, sir,' the Doctor said, setting his arms a-kimbo, 'and how do you like the prosperous village of Tickenham?'

'I think it a very pretty place,' Sholto answered. 'Anything after those hateful London streets.'

'Nevertheless, in those hateful London streets we are going to make fame and fortune!' the Doctor said, alluding to Sholto's professional projects. 'That is so, is it not, sir?'

'Some day,' Sholto answered carelessly. 'When I am tired of green fields.'

'And tired of village practice,' cried Dr. Jubilee, seeing that his young friend hesitated. 'Tired of being physician in ordinary to working men's clubs, where you get twenty pounds a year for one hundred pounds' worth of work; where you are sent trudging through miry lanes and over soppy fields to attend a case of rheumatism, the worst symptoms being over before you arrive, and the patient gone to his work again; where, after this consoling discovery, you mire and sop home again; where the whole transaction occupies two hours, mudds your Sunday trousers and wears out your boots; where, when you sit down to compute what you got for the time and toil, you find the gross profit was about sixpence-halfpenny. O, you will soon want to change for London—London, where the streets are paved with gold; where every doctor has a crowd of patients on his doorstep each morning; where every patient has a sovereign in his fist, and all quarrel as to who shall have the privilege of spending his money first. O London, London, for rising men!'

'Still, I will give Tickenham a trial first,' Sholto replied, laughing at the Doctor's sketches. 'Perhaps I may get a few lessons in patience here.'

'Lessons in patience!' exclaimed Dr. Jubilee. 'You will get lessons in patience day by day! Why, there is our dear old district visitor, Mrs. Raffles: that excellent and most respectable

female would have struck out new veins of his particular virtue in the character of the patriarch Job. Mrs. Raffles, sir, is devoted to the good of her species, and she goes about this village with a satchel the size of a medium carpet-bag, and this satchel, sir, is an apothecary's shop, a provision warehouse, and a religious library all in one. Whenever she hears of any disaster, material, moral, or spiritual, she plunges into that satchel and brings up something suited to the case. Mrs. Raffles, sir, will follow in your steps as you visit the poor, and she will revise your opinions and your treatment and criticise your behaviour, and do it all from the standpoint of the philanthropist. A philanthropist has the grand privilege, sir, of making herself disagreeable as a duty, and our female philanthropists have the sense of duty very strong. If you, after careful professional examination, pronounce a complaint to be well-marked cold in the head, Mrs. Raffles will go round the town and declare it is on the chest. She will count the spots of the measles on a family of six, and then rebuke you because you do not give time enough to examine the cases. Then she will go to the Rector, and report you as not adequate to the position of Medical Officer to the Parochial Charity.

'And what will the Rector say?' Sholto asked.

'The Rector will say, "Thank you, Mrs. Raffles, I will attend to the matter."' Dr. Jubilee assumed a grave and official tone. 'Then the Rector will meet you in the street, and lay his hand on your shoulder and say, "Now, my young friend, I hope you are getting on comfortably; I am sure we all owe you a debt of gratitude for your attention to the

poor;" for he is a kind-hearted man—easy-going, they call him, but he knows mankind—and womankind. There are no wiser simpletons going than our parsons, sir, and none who use their wisdom and simplicity for better purposes. Our Rector, for instance, gets a lot of work out of old Mrs. Raffles, for which he allows her to burst into his study three times a week and scold all round. He takes it quite wonderfully, sitting still and smiling. As for poor me, under such circumstances I should be tearing up and down like a monkey in a cage.'

Sholto roared with laughter at this picture, and his grave mother broke into a smile.

'Yes, sir,' the Doctor went on, 'patience you will need; and patience your worthy mother will need, for she will sometimes hear her son censured when she expects to hear him praised; and she will have to hear him reprimanded for indolence when she will know he has been working too hard. But never mind, sir. I had it all to bear myself for many a year; and here I stand, at the age of sixty-eight, and I can bear a few knocks yet.'

'And give a few too, I dare say,' Sholto ventured to remark.

'Perhaps so, sir—perhaps so,' the Doctor replied. 'But that is neither here nor there. What I have been saying now is by the way of an introduction to your first year's work in this prosperous town of Tickenham.'

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE OLD, OLD STORY OF LOVE'S
YOUNG DREAM.

AMONG the many inducements to the practice of virtue which the Maker of the world has pro-

vided for His creatures, there is one which ought to be as powerful as any rational motive can. This is the fact that our good behaviour has so great an effect on the welfare and comfort of our immediate friends, concerning whose happiness (unless we are without human instincts) we must feel warm interest.

Margaret Alexander was now the proudest and happiest woman in England. For years she had lived for her son, and centred in him all her human hopes. She had marked his dangerous slips, and had tried by all the means in her power to restore him to the paths of reason and religion. Indeed, despairing of success, she had resorted to one device of a peculiarly feminine sort, of which more shall be said hereafter. But everything seemed unavailing, and she had given her son up for lost, when all at once she found that he had recovered himself; and from that hour he never gave her a moment's pain.

Sholto was a young fellow of generous instincts. He had never been really vicious. Now that he was leading an honourable and manly life, full of occupation and animated by sound ambition, he was a son of whom any mother might be proud. His own mother, remembering the fate which had threatened him, and considering him as he now was, felt joy and gratitude running through her heart in a constant stream.

It would have been hard had Margaret Alexander left the world without tasting some of those pleasures of success and fruition which are so freely allotted to the base and unworthy. This woman, tall, silver-haired, with features of somewhat masculine cast, and a step still full of energy, was in her way remarkable. Placed in a position where, as by the law of

necessity, most persons would sink into a life of semi-dependence or absolute meanness, she had held her head high through many a struggling year. She had never borrowed, never fawned on wealthy friends for help; and upon a very narrow income she had managed to maintain the position of a poor lady. The shopkeepers of Middleborough treated her with as much deference as if she had been in the habit of rolling to their doors in a carriage. Her credit was unlimited. Her promise was known never to be broken. I believe she would have got a loan of a hundred pounds on her note of hand, even from Daniel Ruddock; for that usurious person would have been perfectly satisfied that she would never borrow without knowing well that she could pay. In short, the wonder of this woman was that while poor she was treated as rich, so completely did her independence and strength of spirit supply the place of wealth and outward show. This was the woman who had struggled for twenty years, sometimes against despair, to bring her son up to usefulness and honour, and who now, when the simple triumph was achieved of making him assistant to Dr. Jubilee, felt that the battle of life was fought and won, and that it was 'light at evening-time.'

Sholto was not at the age when young people think very much about their own ways; yet often, as he came down in the morning and met his mother's calm cheerful face, he reflected that he might have been shipwrecked, and she wretched, had not that unknown friend plucked him out of the ruin into which he was falling.

Sholto had never been able to discover the name of the sender of the hundred pounds, which had

played so important a part in his restoration. Inheriting no small share of his mother's pride, it may perhaps have been doubted if he would in the end have used the money had he not felt convinced that it had been sent by his friend Eugene, whom he regarded as a kind of brother. Sholto did not discover his mistake until the greater part of the money was spent, and no alternative remained. One constant subject of conjecture with him was, Who could the benefactor be? This question arose and arose again, the more persistently because he was now in a position to repay the money. Sholto had never told his mother the story of this mysterious gift, with its long train of consequences; but he had carefully saved the envelope and the few written lines which enclosed the bank-notes, and he hoped that by means of these links he might some day complete a chain of evidence. Soon after he came to Tickenham he was in the most unexpected way enabled farther to trace his benefactor.

From the time of boyhood, Sholto had cherished a very singular passion for Violet Walsingham. Her sweet tender face had printed itself upon his mind when he first saw her, and during all the years that followed he never forgot little Violet, or lost sight of her dear image. Boy lovers do not greatly trouble themselves about possibility and probability, and boy Sholto had filled many a day-dream with pictures of himself and child Violet united and happy for life. In these fairy tales inside the brain all questions of rank and fortune and income were quietly ignored. But when Sholto grew a little older he began to realise the difficulties that must lie in the way of the consummation of his hopes, and at sixteen

—having scarcely seen Violet for four or five years—he formed the idea of studying medicine, and becoming a great doctor, and thus worthy of the girl he loved. This idea sustained him and inspired him with energy for several succeeding years, during which he worked at his studies with the utmost assiduity. Many a vision he had even now of his Violet struck with some dangerous disease, and how his skill brought her back to health, and how her gratitude became a spring of love, and how the rich princess gave her hand to the poor prince, and princess and prince were happy ever afterwards. But as year by year Sholto gained more and more experience of actual life, he recognised more fully that he was living for a dream; and at last, in a fit of heart-sickness, he resolved to banish Violet from his thoughts. It was then that his interval of dissipation occurred; for so long as he kept her in mind he could not take even one downward step. There followed what has been already narrated: his hasty rush towards ruin; his miraculous deliverance; the rebirth of his passion, now distinctly seen as hopeless; and his strenuous and successful efforts to rise in his profession. By this time Sholto was fairly happy, most of all because he saw that day by day his mother looked brighter, walked with a firmer step, and smiled a more cheerful smile.

Margaret Alexander had long ago detected her son's secret. She well knew that insurmountable obstacles lay between the son she loved, and the frail, beautiful Golden Girl. But reading with her clear sight into the workings of his mind, and perceiving how his passion ennobled him, and filled him with good thoughts, she could not bring herself to

speak the word that should for ever break the dream. So when Sholto, from time to time, would talk shyly of the Golden Girls, and then of Violet, Mrs. Alexander would encourage him by talk of her own; and she always marked the tender joy with which her son hung about the one fascinating topic. By correspondence with Sally Badger and Jerome Dawe, and by occasional visits to Middleborough, she saw or heard a great deal of the Golden Girls, and she told Sholto all she thought it wise to tell; but something she kept back which she never dared to let him know.

At one of these conversations a disclosure was made, which sent Sholto's thoughts along the old channel with augmented flood. For the first time he had been telling his mother something of his episode of dissipation, the poverty it brought, and how he was rescued by the gift of one hundred pounds. Mrs. Alexander listened with joy and wonder. Her eyes filled with tears, and her heart was full of secret thanksgivings, as she looked at the handsome son before her, and thought what he might have been. Not even Sholto himself had ever felt deeper thankfulness to his unknown friend than did his mother now, as she poured silent blessings upon that unnamed benefactor.

'If you look at all the circumstances, mother,' said Sholto, 'I think you will see that everything pointed to Eugene.'

Mrs. Alexander shook her head. She knew the character of the Ruddocks, father and son.

'I do not think it was Eugene.'

'I know it was not, mother,' he answered. 'But at first I felt perfectly sure that it must be he. I do not know the real person,

and I do not believe I ever shall.'

They pursued this subject for a time, and Mrs. Alexander at last asked Sholto if he had kept the paper with the written lines. He answered with eagerness that he had treasured it carefully, and she asked to see it, not in the least expecting the disclosure which was to follow. No sooner had her eyes fallen on the paper than she exclaimed,

'Sholto, I know who wrote this!'

'Mother!' he cried in great excitement, and could add not another word.

All at once his mother seemed as if she cared to say no more, but would rather draw back her hasty utterance. This was quite in vain, for Sholto, perceiving by these attempts that there was really something material in her mind, pressed her more and more, until at last, unable to resist him, she said,

'That is the writing of Violet Walsingham.'

'Mother!' the young man again exclaimed, his very breath taken away by this announcement. Then after a moment he added, 'It is impossible. It cannot be true.'

Mrs. Alexander was a calm decisive sort of person, and whatever reason she had at first for keeping the matter secret, she was now resolved to prove her words.

'Have you ever seen writing like it before?' she inquired, holding the paper up.

'Never,' replied Sholto.

'See,' she continued, 'how peculiar it is. Look at these strokes, not from left to right, but from right to left.'

'Yes,' he answered; 'that is to disguise the hand.'

'No such thing,' she answered

quietly. 'This is a natural way of writing. There is no effort, no stiffness; all is free and flowing.'

'So it seems, certainly,' he answered. 'But how do you know that Miss Walsingham wrote it?'

Mrs. Alexander went to her desk and took out a packet addressed to herself.

'The last letter I had from Sally,' she said, 'was written by Violet Walsingham, because Sally was too busy to write herself. Now just compare this envelope with the handwriting of my letter. If the same person did not write both, no separate penmanship can ever be identified.'

Sholto seized the portentous papers, and with a beating heart he scrutinised the two as they lay side by side. No long comparison was needed. Violet Walsingham, being still used to lie a great deal upon a couch, had contracted a most peculiar style of handwriting. There could be neither doubt nor dispute that the two writings were the work of one hand. The conclusion was irresistibly plain—Violet Walsingham had sent the hundred pounds!

'How did she—how *could* she know?' was the first question asked by Sholto in his stupefaction of surprise.

'Probably Eugene told her that he had met you,' his quick-witted mother answered, lighting on the truth at once. 'Of course that was it. Eugene was sure to see them, and very likely to talk about you.'

'And she—she pitied me!' Sholto said, speaking like one in a dream.

'So it must have been,' Mrs. Alexander said gently.

A kind of rebellious irritation flamed up in Sholto. The thought arose that he would have liked rather to have rescued the woman

he loved from some peril than that she should have rescued him.

'If I had known it was—Miss Walsingham,' he said slowly, 'I could not have taken the money.'

'Do not say so, Sholto,' his mother remarked. 'Violet was directed by some higher power. It is the Lord's doing,' the good woman added; 'and it is marvellous in our eyes, Sholto!'

For she was thinking of her son rescued from shame and misery and banishment and death; but he was thinking of Earthly Love.

The two stood together talking for a while, the mother full of gratitude to God, which she freely expressed with streaming eyes; the son minute by minute abandoning his poor pretences of pride, and surrendering himself more and more to the renewed delirium of love. Snow-flakes melt in sunlight, and rushing water carries sand away. Sholto's remnant of pride was soon scattered. Love was his lord. Hope, wild bounding hope, beat in his breast. His was one of those high moods when life and all its glory seems to be within our grasp. He thought no more of disparity of fortune—she a Golden Girl and he a poor boy doctor. There was an auspicious force in this disclosure which spoke hope to his heart, and spoke it so loudly as to drown a sober whisper of reason which murmured something about reality and probability. Sholto was caught up in a great absorbing whirlwind of feeling, and to him, as to many a lover before him, nothing seemed impossible. The dream of his life, which even an hour before was floating far away, beautiful as the clouds of heaven and as remote, had become actual. Violet loved him. Her hand had saved him. After thi

one thing only could follow : she would—she must—be his at last !

Mrs. Alexander, standing quietly by, marked his changing colour and expression ; and she read his thoughts as clearly as if his face had been a written page. There was not in her eyes the hope that

shone in his. He was in a lover's ecstasy ; she was looking at matters with the quiet sadness which somehow is most the mood of those who best know the facts around them, and who are swayed by the pathetic scepticism of middle life.

(To be continued.)

THE FIRST LARK IN THE LANE.

Up, up my spirit too shall soar

With you, rejoicing in the sweet spring-time,
Striving to enter the ethereal door

Closing the heavens ; then the clouds to climb,
To smile amongst the angels, and to say,
'I am so happy, lark, on this fair day.'

And then, descending to the earth again,

Alight on some familiar hedge's green,
Count every wonder of the grassy lane,

And see with fresh delight all that was seen
Less heedfully before the lark and I
Flew near the angels in the clear blue sky.

Ere yet my sight your swift flight did embrace,

Cherishing in a rapturous gratitude
Your delicate movements and the dainty grace

Wherewith a loving God has thus imbued
His messenger—why, then you were sweet to see,
But now the heavenly glamour is over me.

And I regard you, lark, as if you were

An emblem of some bright far land wherein
We wandered for an interval, then bare

Its brighter news together, to begin
In most exultant thrills still deeper songs,
In hope, the work which to man's lot belongs.

R. M. H.

TALES OUT OF SCHOOL.

BY AN EX-OFFICIAL.

CHAPTER I.

GENTLEMEN FOR LIFE.

'You must pay your footing, you know,' said Blackley, as soon as I was left alone with him and another clerk of much the same social calibre.

This was my first introduction to the honours and responsibilities of the public service. The chief clerk had taken me up to the room in which my duties were to commence, and presented me, with much *aplomb*, to the two companions in whose society I was to spend my immediate future, during the hours of daily work from ten to four.

The office to which I had been appointed, although it was under the Admiralty at that time, was one of a very fourth-rate character, as I soon discovered; and my dear father, who was a gentleman of the old school, little knew into what questionable company he had consigned his innocent son.

The other clerk who shared with Mr. Blackley the room in which I had now been placed was Mr. Potter, a vulgar and coarse sort of person, much given to beer; and, with this gentleman's assistance, it was decided, after a parley on the subject, that the 'footing' I had been called upon to pay should take the form of half a gallon of the best Alton ale; and I fancy my new friends chuckled with each other in that they had met with a youth so green as to be easily persuaded

to meet their bibulous requisition.

The libation was obtained at a little shop hard by, where 'Alton Ale' was advertised in large black letters on a ground of white canvas, with a further announcement that you might have a glass of ale and a sandwich for fourpence. It arrived in two bright pewter pots with spouts, and was accompanied with three tall and narrow glasses, three to a pint, which would give four glasses of ale to each of us.

I was only sixteen, and quite unaccustomed to the use of strong liquor, or the ways of my more advanced *confrères*. They persuaded me, however, to take my share of the ale, and the consequence was that I was conspicuously unwell when I arrived at home, greatly to the scandal of an old servant of the family, who had detected the cause of my indisposition. Nevertheless, it is an ill wind that blows no good, and this incident, otherwise unmitigated and untoward, impressed upon my mind a fact which I often found useful in after life, namely, that four quarts make one gallon. Many weights and measures laboriously learned in school-days have been obliterated from the tablets of my memory; but 'four quarts one gallon' will remain like lead in the rock for ever.

Mr. Blackley was a loud-talking common kind of fellow, with an offensive grin on his countenance, enhanced by long protuber-

ant upper teeth, and he was known in the office by the sobriquet of 'Carker.' Where he came from nobody knew; but it was remembered that when he was promoted from the status of an extra clerk, liable to discharge at a week's notice, and appointed as a third-class clerk in the establishment, at a salary of 70*l.* a year, he exclaimed with a fine unction, 'Thank God, I'm a gentleman for life!'

Mr. Potter, as I have said, was fond of his beer—a little too fond, in fact; and I am afraid he was not free from the sin of gluttony. A bet was made one day that he would not eat six dozen oysters at a sitting. He accepted the challenge on condition that a due proportion of stout should be added to the repast; and, having fairly won his wager by engulfing the whole, was taken ill, and not seen again for two days afterwards.

These two men were, perhaps, hardly fair specimens of the class that composed the establishment. There were also a few gentlemen, and sons of gentlemen, who silently deplored their fate in being compelled in any degree to associate with the Blackleys and Potters; but of these less interesting characters I shall have little to say, as they do not serve so well to adorn a story.

One respectable old file had been, it was whispered, a small grocer, put in by the influence of a member of Parliament, for assistance rendered in election times. Another, a heavy bucolic kind of creature, with no more capacity for office duties than a green goose from his native village, owed his appointment to an act of electioneering strategy more characteristic of the good old times than of these degenerate days of vote by ballot. He had, in fact,

at a critical moment, helped to pitch some independent electors over a bridge, and thus turned the scale of victory in favour of the Liberal candidate, and the policy of the grand old man of that period.

I have remarked already that the Marine Ticket Office, as I shall call my department, was a very fourth-rate office. Some of its rooms were in the Custom House, with which it had dealings, and some were in Lower Thames-street. The approach to the premises from the west was by no means free from danger, for you had to pass Billingsgate fish-market, and thread your way through a street always crowded with vans and carts laden with fish from the market, or merchandise from the docks. Costermongers and porters dashed wildly along and across at every angle. Huge bales hung aloft from light-looking cranes, and seemed to threaten destruction to the passengers on the pavement beneath. You were clever, indeed, if you could always dodge your way through the noisy crowd without brushing against some living or dead obstruction, or without getting a cod's tail dabbed in your eye. On one occasion I only escaped crushing between two loaded vans by jumping quickly on the shaft of one of them. The driver called out,

'Now then, governor, where are you going to?'

'No. 76,' I said; and then I alighted.

The odours of the neighbourhood were legion, powerful, pungent, and curiously intermingled, ubiquitous and omnipresent, and of course they pervaded the offices of the Marine Ticket Department.

The head of the establishment was a gruff old naval officer of a

type now nearly extinct. His pay altogether was only about 500*l.* a year, and the average emoluments of the clerks under his command were small in the extreme. The shoe pinched severely in many cases where these men were married, and had perhaps a young family to provide for. But Captain Brough discouraged all efforts to screw better terms out of the Government, and sent back the humble petitions he was asked to forward, with a remark that he could get men to do the work for twelve shillings a week. A surly old curmudgeon was Brough. If you wanted an hour's leave, it was necessary to enter his den and ask for permission; and though the leave was seldom refused it was not often asked, for the old man looked thunder as he grunted his grudging 'Yes, surely.' He held to the old quarter-deck ideas which obtained in those rough days, when a rope's end was the readiest kind of argument; and if he had not feared the leaven of gentlemanly element in his heterogeneous crew, he would have treated them all with mighty little consideration.

He was sold one day, and trapped into unintended politeness to one of his own men. This gentleman—for he happened to be one—having got himself up in the transcendental style of the period with a view to attend a garden-party, was not recognised by Captain Brough as he entered the dreaded apartment to ask for leave. The clerk, in all the beauty of a perfect frock-coat and lavender kid gloves, bowed as he approached the austere presence. The Captain rose from his seat and bowed likewise.

'Good-morning, sir.'

'Good-morning, sir,' replied the astonished young man.

'What can I have the pleasure—'

'Will you allow me to leave for the day, if you please? I have—'

'Yes,' growled the old man; and he banged himself down again into his chair as red as an angry sunset.

No further instance of politeness to his men was ever heard of, and I therefore record this with the greater satisfaction, as proving the existence of at least a germ of good manners within his rugged breast.

At the end of a long passage on the third floor of the Thames-street office was a large square room, in which five or six 'gentlemen' worked at their respective desks. This room was known as 'the Refuge for the Destitute,' from the fact, however it came to pass, that its occupants were notoriously impecunious. Into this room, in the early days of my service, I was for a time unfortunately transferred, after a limited enjoyment of the society of Messrs. Blackley and Potter. The denizens of the Refuge, when I joined them, were one Childe, to begin with the eldest, a gray-headed old sinner, and a man, I believe, of good family. The instincts of a gentleman were still apparent in his style and manner, and his hair was as carefully brushed as his threadbare coat, on which not a speck was ever discernible. Like his companions, he had passed through the Insolvent Court more than once, and knew thoroughly all the intricacies of the passage, and how to take advantage of every opening that a fallible legislature might have left unguarded.

In manner and appearance he was a perfect type of the respectable old gentleman; a sort of man whose quiet gravity would inspire you with respect for his experience, and whose advice you would

ask in early days, when you stood on the threshold of a new career. My desk was so placed that I sat with my back to his, and he was very kind and very attentive, lending me a helping hand, whenever my duties led me to ask instruction in their details. I had not been in the room, however, many days, before he surprised me by slipping into my hand, unseen by his fellows, a little note. 'Would I do him the favour to lend him five shillings till pay-day? He was pressed for a few shillings, and would return the loan punctually.' I was naturally pained to find my respectable old friend in such straits, and carefully avoiding publicity, handed him the trifle he needed. This first request for money was succeeded by many another as time went on; but I am bound to say that, although I was thus perennially out of pocket to a small amount, Mr. Childe invariably met his liabilities before borrowing again, and in the end I was not a great loser by him. Other 'gentlemen' began to borrow small sums until I grew wary by experience; and I overheard Childe one day rebuking my friends, *sotto voce*, for spoiling the market.

Another occupant of this room was Mr. Good. He was very clever with his fists, and taught me the noble art of self-defence, in spare moments, until I could box as well as my instructor. Mr. Good was a stout and merry little man, distinguished by a facial ornament rarely worn by Englishmen in the days preceding the Crimean War, namely a moustache, which, in his case, was carefully and meretriciously blackened with cosmetique. He used to add to his slender income after office-hours by commercial transactions in a patent beer-tap, and a valve for draining river barges when they were left by the

receding tide high on the muddy shore of the Thames.

Mr. Kemble was the scholar and wit of the party. A very clever and intellectual man, a graduate of Cambridge, and a gentleman by birth, he was a charming companion. Hence, probably, it was that he had been led into extravagance, and had contracted habits of drinking which exhibited their effects too plainly in the rubicund tint of his handsome features; although I think I never but once saw him at all intoxicated. He was always good-tempered and full of fun; but while he was merrily wasting his pittance among genial companions, it was known that his wife and children at home often wanted the bare necessities of life. Poor fellow! he came to grief ultimately, and was appointed Inspector of Public Buildings, as he said in his jocular way; for this office is one to which no pay is attached, and the holder, having all his time on his hands, is at liberty to inspect the exterior of as many public buildings as he pleases. But I shall have more to say about Mr. Kemble.

Brown was the fourth occupant of the Refuge, and used to 'do bills' with Kemble, which, when they fell due, were renewed at heavy interest by Mr. George, the Jew money-lender, until after many exciting vicissitudes the two hapless financiers were landed in the Insolvent Court, and, having been whitewashed more or less, recommenced the same course *de novo*.

The passage leading to the Refuge was dark and long, and there was a projection in the floor in one part of it which was apt to cause a stranger approaching the room to stumble; so that if it happened that a bailiff or a pro-

cess-server was minded to search out one of these my friends, due warning of his advent was heralded by a stumble in the corridor. Such a stumble I one day heard, and presently followed a peremptory tapping at the door.

'Come in,' said Good; and the handle turned, and the door shook, but no one entered. 'Come in!' again shouted Good, as much as to say, 'Why the dickens don't you come in when you're told?'—and this time a rough fellow entered.

'Mr. Childe here?' he asked.

'No,' said Good, 'he's not here to-day.'

He was 'not at home,' in fact, as we say in polite society.

I turned round surprised. Mr. Childe, I knew, was there a moment before, and I could scarcely believe my senses when I found he was now *non est*. The mystery was solved by and by when the rough visitor had stumbled back again, and the old gentleman, looking sheepishly over in my direction, emerged from a cupboard in the opposite corner.

This incident threw much light into my young understanding in regard to the little world around me, and marked my initiation into the secrets of the brotherhood. I now found how it was that the recent visitor could not at once walk in when he was called upon to do so. A bolt had been attached to the frame of the door, so contrived as to drop vertically into its place, and this was connected by cranks to a cord that hung like a bell-rope over the desk of Mr. Good. In times of peril, when duns were expected or process-servers known to be about, the door was kept carefully fastened from within, and while a stranger fumbled at the handle, in response to a repeated invitation to 'Come in,' his quarry

had time to disappear into a cupboard or under a desk.

One day a footstep heavy and slow announced the coming of a suspicious person up the dark passage. Kemble knew he was wanted, and forthwith retired under cover. It so happened, however, that Brown and he had been 'flying a kite' together, on which legal action had ripened into a writ, and both these worthies were now in demand. The man walked in after the usual difficulty with the door-handle, and asked,

'Is Mr. Brown here?'

'No,' said Brown, who had been addressed. 'He's on leave.'

Not a muscle of Brown's face betrayed him or evinced aught but grave composure.

'Hum,' said the man. 'I want to see Mr. Kemble.'

'He's on leave, too,' said Brown.

The stranger's eye waxed dangerous as it searched slowly round the room, and seemed for an ominous moment to rest suspiciously on the cupboard where Kemble was in hiding.

'I think,' said he to Brown—'I think Mr. Brown is away; but it's my belief that Kemble is not far off.'

And with this remark, sententiously delivered, he retired baffled and grumbling.

On another occasion Kemble had a still more narrow escape—this time from arrest. A warrant was out against him for contempt of court on account of his failure to meet payments ordered by the judge; and a bailiff, whom he had succeeded in eluding for a considerable time, at last fairly ran him to earth in a room in the Custom House, occupied at that time by some of his own particular fraternity.

Not a moment was to be lost.

Kemble, flushed and excited, rushed into the room.

'Jones,' said he, 'there's a bailiff after me. What's to be done?'

'Done? Why, the bailiff, of course,' said Jones, as he thought for an instant. 'Here you are, old man. Up you go, on to the shelf there.'

Jones was a man of ready resource; and quickly grasping the situation, he placed the movable steps against a strong shelf high up on the wall, used for storing away ponderous ledgers and bundles of old papers belonging to past years.

Kemble was young and active, and not without a keen enjoyment of the comic side of the too realistic drama in which he was the leading performer. In another moment he had scaled the ladder and doubled himself up on the shelf into the smallest possible compass.

'Give me some brown paper,' said Jones.

Ready hands brought the desired material, and, with a few dexterous manipulations, Kemble was transformed into a bundle as nearly as might be resembling the inanimate packages on other parts of the shelf. The plan was well conceived and ably carried out; but one danger that threatened its success had not been foreseen by its designer, and this arose from the overmastering sense of the ludicrous which now took possession of the man on the shelf. The paper began to shake violently, and it was evident that the inside of the parcel was convulsed with laughter.

'Shut up, you fool,' said Jones, between laughter and anger; and just as he spoke a knocking at the door startled the assembly into a full realisation of the gravity of the situation. The steps had been

removed; and when the bailiff was admitted he wore a confident air, which seemed to say, 'My man, I've got you this time;' but he only found a few clerks calmly pursuing their accustomed avocations, and quite unconscious of having seen Mr. Kemble. Indeed they believed he was up in the high-lands (here the brown paper seemed to rustle), and the gentleman must have made a mistake.

The man looked very knowing, and said, 'He thought not.'

'O, if he doubted their word, would he like to look in the cupboards? Perhaps he thought they had *concealed* Mr. Kemble;' and Jones waxed scornful and sarcastic as he assumed the character of head of the room, and added, 'Pray make any search you think proper, sir; but be quick about it, for I cannot have the gentlemen disturbed in this manner.'

The bailiff was outwitted. He looked round in a disappointed sort of way, and finally said,

'Well, I beg your pardon, gentlemen, but I could a-swore as I saw Mr. Kemble enter this 'ere room as I was at the hother end of the passage. I could a-swore it, gentlemen! On'y that fool of a 'all-porter kep' me back askin' of my business, or else I'd a 'ad my 'and on 'im.'

And so the parcel escaped detection, and lived to tell the tale with many a laugh afterwards.

Brown's career was abruptly terminated one Sunday morning. He was a fine, tall, reckless fellow, and having gone out for a row on the river with a party of his friends, was thoughtless enough to stand up in the boat, which canted over, and poor Brown went head foremost to the bottom. It was supposed that he must have stuck there; for he did not come up again till days afterwards, when

his body was discovered floating on the muddy tide.

Of the remaining sojourner in the Refuge it is needless to say more than that he was a young man very fond of admiration, and though not wanting in brain-power, his mind was chiefly absorbed in the study of dress and appearance, and the making up of betting-books.

CHAPTER II.

QUEEN'S BARGAINS—VARIOUS.

It was a wonder that with such 'hard bargains' the Queen's service could be carried on at all, or to any useful purpose; but as a matter of fact these erratic characters were as a rule smart fellows, who could do as much work in an hour as plodding mediocrity could accomplish in three. It is too frequently your bright and clever man who yields to temptation, and goes to the dogs; while another, of mere average ability, keeping within the bounds of prudence and respectability, often rises to comparative eminence by sheer force of steady plodding and the 'magic of patience.' The tortoise reaches the goal that the hare might have attained in a bound.

Even in Mr. Blackley's room and the Refuge work had to be done, and was done, while in other parts of the office there were plenty of steady-going and industrious fellows who conscientiously did their duty.

One somewhat eccentric individual, but notorious for patient assiduity, went out for two hours' leave to get married. He said nothing of his intention to any companion of the quill, but proceeded to meet his bride at the altar, and having duly taken his part in the ceremony and signed

the register, he sent the lady home in a cab, and came back to his duty as if nothing had happened. He was wont to laugh grimly over the incident in later days, whenever it pleased the fraternity to use it to point a moral or adorn a facetious tale; and his pen only travelled faster as he chuckled at the remembrance of the joke.

This man was of a penurious and saving turn of mind—almost, indeed, a miser. It was reported that he once bought a table to add to his domestic comfort, and was seen carrying it home himself to save portage.

There were some men who ultimately distinguished themselves in a mild way; and notably one who became (and is now, I believe) the head of the same department, in its remodelled and purified condition, in which he then served as an extra clerk.

Mr. Holman was another instance of a hard-working and deserving official. He was the head of a branch, which he ruled with a rod of iron; and woe to the scapegrace who neglected his duty in Mr. Holman's branch! It was one of this gentleman's duties to summon before the magistrates any unlucky seamen who could be charged with desertion from the mercantile marine, and his name was dreaded by Jack more than a hurricane on a lee-shore. Strings of these unfortunate fellows were brought up from time to time, and punished by imprisonment for breaking contract and deserting their ships in foreign ports. So that altogether Mr. Holman had little popularity to boast of, either in the branch or out of it.

Merchant seamen are a curious body to deal with, and by an eccentric practice of changing their names as often as they wished to escape identification, they gave

Holman a great deal of trouble ; but perhaps the trouble was not unmingled with a sportsman's pleasure in stalking or marking down the game.

These same men, however, were very grateful for any little service rendered in guiding them through such official mazes as they were sometimes entangled in ; and more than once I was asked by Jack, as he twisted his hat about and examined it, with a murmured apology for presuming so much, whether I wouldn't 'take something' with him, by way of compensation for my trouble ; the 'something' being usually a bottle of wine, when it was specified, as it was naturally opined that a person in my exalted position could not be expected to stoop to a glass of grog, much less to the foaming beverage of Alton and its breweries. But these kind offers were declined with many thanks, much to the injury of Jack's sensitive nature.

The mate of a small foreign-going craft having to fill up a form, in which there was a column for 'Christian and surname at full length,' wrote carefully therein, 'John Smith, full length 5 feet 8 inches.' But I am inclined to think that in this instance a certain waggishness prompted the seafaring mind, coupled perhaps with a degree of contempt for official ceremonial.

Before I leave the unclassic region below bridge, and transfer the scene to less unfashionable quarters in the West, I must add one more story :

A dear old friend, now gone to his rest, served for several of his early years in one of the Custom House departments. He chafed under the irksome monotony of his elementary duties, the small pay, and the long, long road he saw before him ere he could

hope to obtain a competency that was worth toiling for. He felt that he was capable of higher things than ticking and totalling, and determined to cut himself adrift from a service in which there was so little room for ambition, and so poor a prospect of success in life. His friends, who had taken infinite pains to procure him the appointment, tried hard to dissuade him from relinquishing a permanent and assured income for a mere chance of success in the commercial world, into which, unaided, he proposed to venture. Fortunately for him, however, he refused to listen to his advisers, and having secured a clerkship in a City office, he worked so well that before long he had made himself indispensable to his employers, and was able to command a partnership in the firm ; until, having amassed a well-earned fortune on the Stock Exchange, he became one of the best known and most respected men in the City. Here was an instance in which the Government lost a valuable servant through a policy of economy.

Boys will be boys, and clever boys must have an outlet for surplus energy, as well as a sphere for the exercise of their inventive faculties. In the same room with my friend J., in the Custom House Department, there was an elderly gentleman of the stereotyped pattern of an old and respectable Government official. Every morning he walked in at ten o'clock, and hung his hat on the same peg it had occupied year after year for a generation. His umbrella was placed in the same corner, and his gloves, carefully pulled out and folded in half, were deposited in the same pocket of his speckless out-of-door coat. The coat was changed for an old office habiliment, rubbed shiny on

the sleeves and shoulders ; and, having first brushed his remaining locks of hair, he produced a puff-box from a sly corner in the lavatory, and proceeded to powder his bald head ; he was then ready to commence the routine of his daily duty.

J. and another wicked young rascal had taken due note of our old friend's habits, and one hot day in July furtively introduced into the puff-box a quantity of finely pulverised loaf-sugar. The old gentleman proceeded through the usual morning programme, and having powdered the top of his head—this time with refined sugar—sat down to work. The wicked boys were watching ; and presently the flies began to discover the treat prepared for them. The old gentleman's hand went up to his bald head again and again as he drove off the persistent insects. Then he powdered the irritated skin again ; but all to no purpose. The flies, he said, were getting very troublesome—'Phew ! foof, s-s-s ! really it's impossible to work !' He got up and washed, and powdered again ; but back came the flies, and the poor old boy was worried the whole afternoon.

J. and his young coadjutor in the sugar experiment had observed that another of their companions of the desk was in the habit of finding some excuse every day for going to another part of the department at the very time when at certain hours the business came in thick and fast, and was most troublesome. This shirking on the part of Jones, we will call him, made the work fall still more heavily on our young inventives, and they matured a plan for paying him out. Jones had a little place in the suburbs, where he kept a few fowls, and was able to cultivate scarlet-runners, and a

row or so of cabbages for the table, together with a moss-rose for his button-hole, or a scarlet geranium. Every few days, in the laying season, he was accustomed to bring up a supply of new-laid eggs, two of which he boiled daily for his lunch in the water-muller provided by the establishment for toilet purposes ; and having a frugal mind—and withal a slender purse—he occasionally succeeded in adding the luxury of a sample bottle of port-wine, which, by some means, he obtained for nothing when he made his mysterious peregrinations at the busy times already mentioned.

Taking advantage of an early opportunity in Jones's absence, J. and his friend carefully boiled all the six eggs they found for fifteen minutes, then immersed them in cold water, dried them nicely, and put them back into their neat little basket ; then they opened the sample bottle of port, added an ounce of jalap to the contents, corked it up, and awaited their victim.

When lunch-time came, Jones boiled two of his eggs, and was much puzzled when he sat down to eat them. Thought he must have brought up the nest-eggs by mistake. Boiled two more, and then the other two. It was no use, he could not eat them, so he munched his bread-and-butter and drank his port-wine. I need not pursue the present history of Jones in the next twenty-four hours, nor picture the glee of his avenged persecutors. Suffice it to say that he learned how the path of duty was the way of safety, and concluded thenceforward to avoid shirking, lest a worse thing might happen to him.

If in these days of romance veracity alone has any merit to commend itself, the stories I re-

late are all true, though the names in many cases are necessarily fictitious. I wish, however, to disclaim any intention of writing an autobiography.

As the Chinaman may enjoy his bird's-nest soup or roasted puppy, and the Russian his tallow-candle *au naturel*, so there are people I know who have pleasure in the study of biography, even of humble individuals; but whether the taste for that kind of reading be natural or acquired, biography never had much attraction for me, and autobiography still less. I would, therefore, spare the kind reader. So far as I refer to my personal history, I do so merely of necessity or convenience.

After spending, then, about four years in the Marine Ticket Department, my dear father died, and I was translated to a superior office—one of the first, in fact, under the Crown.

My father was the representative of an old Middlesex family, that had given its sons to both arms of the service militant, while he himself had passed an honourable life in the Civil Service; and it was in posthumous recognition of his merits that I received an appointment in the same office; not, however, without strong representations in my behalf by influential persons. In those days it was the custom to reward the long and faithful services of a father in this manner; and it was felt to be a wrong done to the Service when a privilege by which they could at least hope to provide for one son was taken away by the adoption of the present system of public competition for all appointments. A Civil servant has fewer chances than men in other professions of placing his sons out in life. He cannot bring them up to take his place, and continue a business that his industry

and talents might have made in the open professions; and from the impossibility of making a fortune, or doing more than living from hand to mouth, he generally has no capital to start them with.

On taking up my new appointment, I was kindly received by my father's old friends; and the chief clerk of my division, who was a type of the English gentleman of that generation, wished me, in rounded periods, 'a successful official career.'

This department was in every way a contrast to the Inferno I had escaped from. The fine lofty rooms themselves had an air of repose about them, and the old spirit of the days of chivalry seemed to linger in the place. The officials were then, with scarcely one exception, the sons of gentlemen, and had obtained their appointments under a careful system of selection, on the recommendation of responsible men of rank or high position. The beginning of evil days, however, was even then dawning.

The department was presided over, roughly speaking, by a secretary and six principal officers; and my division was governed by Sir Robert Crowley, a personage who had risen by his talents and energy from the humble position of a dockyard clerk. He was a man of great ambition; and although he was ready to reward those who served him, he would trample under foot all mere sentiment, or what is generally understood by gentlemanly feeling, in order to gain his ends.

Promotion by seniority was no longer to be recognised. The next man might be quite fitted for the higher post when his turn came; but if Sir Robert chose to consider another and a junior officer better qualified, the long-

deferred hopes of the senior were doomed to cruel disappointment. This was called a cut-throat system; and much injustice, heart-burning, and bitterness were the product of it.

The old rule of promotion by seniority, qualified by a condition of *sufficient* merit, provided an adequate incentive to zeal, while it discouraged the self-asserting emulation and scarce concealed bidding for promotion which is now so well understood in Government departments, and so offensive to the really able but unostentatious officer.

At the worst, under this time-honoured method, you might promote a man of minimum qualifications who would lean on the judgment of stronger minds, and act with caution rather than brilliance. But under the new theory of promoting by merit alone, you not only open a wide door to the parasite and the favourite, but necessarily promote the man who has taken the greatest and possibly the meanest advantage of his companions to parade his own ability, to tout for notoriety, and to advertise his talents. The showy, noisy, and unprincipled, and those of coarser mind, are too probably brought to the front, and they surround themselves, whenever they can, with their own creatures, to the detriment and not to the advantage of the public service.

Sir Robert, in the days of his glory, took a house at Crowley and called it Crowley House; so that he became Sir Robert Crowley, of Crowley House, Crowley. He set up his horses and lived in much style; but he died at last a bankrupt, I believe, leaving his widow penniless.

I have but few anecdotes of my short experience under his *régime*, but one, at least, will be amusing.

Matthew Bingley was a dear old boy, dating from the last century, and highly proper in all his communications with the classes below him. He had an unfortunate impediment in his speech, and a painful habit of stammering. It was told of him that passing through the spacious hall of Somerset House, he saw sitting there a sailor, waiting for some information. The sailor held a parrot on his forefinger, and beguiled the idle moments by exhibiting his bird to the messengers and others standing around. Bingley joined the little audience, who respectfully made way for him.

'Can your p-p-arrot t-t-talk?' said he, in his condescending manner.

The sailor looked up contemptuously.

'If he couldn't talk better than you,' he replied, 'I'd wring his (blank) neck.'

A sailor's vocabulary is limited; and the adjective he used on this occasion to qualify the substantive was one of universal application with him and his mates. It proved so expressive, however, that Bingley retreated without further parley amid a suppressed titter from the scandalised little crowd.

I said there was an air of refinement about this office and its occupants; but Nature delights in variety, and its light and shade find their counterpart in human character. There was a surly messenger who had, perhaps, been irritated by intermittent contact with an illiterate public, for in those days the School Board was not. It was his duty to answer inquiries asent the well-being of sailors on foreign stations; and, having informed a poor woman that her husband was dead, he added,

'There! Pay your shilling, and cry outside.'

This old wretch, if I remember rightly, had been a sailor himself; but, for the sake of the cloth, I hope I am in error; for a sailor, above all, has a tender heart for a suffering woman.

I was transferred after a year to the division of another principal officer, and here I was happy to find that no cut-throat system had been introduced. The work was done well and conscientiously under a man who was the soul of honour, and abhorred all truculence or deviation from the unwritten law of social amenity. The name of Sir Thomas Tassell Grant will always be remembered with affection and honour. Peace to him! In contrast with the wearing, tearing worriers of modern life, he stands in proportion as a statesman to a fox-terrier.

I had learned in Sir Robert's division the methods of calculating the cost of every ship in the navy in the items of pay of officers and wages of seamen, and had been inducted into the mysteries of preparing estimates under these heads for my superiors to lay before the Legislature; but I was now in a new line of business, more varied, perhaps, in its duties, but even less poetic. The division in which I recommenced an official life was termed irreverently 'The Beef and Pork Shop.' It was, in reality, the Marine Commissariat Department, providing all the food and clothing of the seamen and marines that man the British fleet and constitute the first line of defence of our native country. I had to begin again at the bottom of the ladder, and bend my intellectual faculties to the monotonous duty of copying letters. All letters at that time were laboriously copied by hand into classified books kept for the

purpose; but this cumbrous system has long since given way, like hand-loom weaving, to superior machinery. Very soon, however, I was allowed to write the letters themselves, till, in the course of years, I had advanced through all the stages of official life to reporting and superintending.

This curriculum had a great advantage over that now in fashion. The superintending officer was trained to a perfect knowledge of all the details of his profession, and was necessarily more efficient than a man under the new system, whose only knowledge of detail can be such as he may pick up from his juniors. For latter-day wisdom aims at making superior officers at once out of inexperienced though highly educated men who have not been through the drudgery of apprenticeship. We should not expect success to follow a similar experiment in any other profession or calling. But the reformer, with his nose in the air, says, 'Pooh! Any man can be a clerk.'

Now, the superintendent of a branch is a man who needs a wide and intimate knowledge of his business; and although he is still called by the misleading title of clerk, with the prefix of 'Principal,' 'Senior,' or what not, his duties, for the most part, resemble those of a consulting barrister in constant practice.

Such a man must be able to get up case after case, each complicated and differing from the last, weigh evidence, and recommend the course to be adopted; and the matured and trustworthy judgment required in any Civil servant who holds a responsible position can be acquired thoroughly by that man only who begins with the alphabet of his profession.

By my side, in the early days of my pilgrimage through the 'Beef and Pork Shop,' sat a young man, junior to me in years, but distinguished from many of his fellows by natural talent, if not also by the aspirations of a mind impatient of the drudgery to which he was indeed too long condemned. Conscious of his own ability he qualified in his spare hours, and duly passed his examination as a barrister. He had taken his chambers in the Temple, and actually sent in his resignation of the Government appointment, rejoicing in emancipation from the trammels of red tape, and exhilarated by the contemplation of the wide field opening before him in which he felt assured of a brilliant career, when, unfortunately for him, his health broke down. Unfortunately for him, but happily, as it turned out, for his country. He was retained in the service, and, after reconstructing the contract system of the Admiralty, reorganising the financial laws of the island of Malta, and rendering many other valuable services to consecutive Governments, he now holds a high position in Cairo; for this gentleman is His Excellency Francis W. Rowsell, C.B., C.M.G., *Administrateur Anglais des Domaines de l'Etat Egyptien*.

In the various divisions of the department were many men of great promise. Several, like Mr. Rowsell, had qualified for barristers, and were none the less useful as Civil servants in consequence. One well-remembered friend, who has gone to his long home, had not only been called to the Bar, but had studied during his limited holidays and in evening hours, and taken his degree at the London University.

Poor McKay! when the list of successful candidates was published, he looked eagerly down the names in the book till he found his own among them, and was surprised to observe an asterisk against it. 'Hullo!' he said, 'what's this?' He hoped some additional honour had fallen to him; and I shall not forget the merriment with which he read out the footnote: 'This gentleman has not paid his fees.'

He got married, and set up a small suburban establishment, where, one day, in the back garden, a facetious neighbour detected sundry pairs of stockings fluttering in the breeze over the little grass-plot, and sent him some amusing verses on the subject. I read and returned them with the following addendum, for which I beg to apologise, regretting that I have not the original lines, which were written by a lady unknown to me:

Methinks how I see them waving—
The blue, the red, and the white—
From the sunny hour of morning
Till eve with her paling light,

Tripping a dance in shadow,
Down on the even lawn—
Ghosts of the fairy tooties
That never felt a corn.

Only a sock or a stocking,
Or a cuff or two here and there;
But nothing that might be shocking
To eyes of the young and fair.

Fancy may picture a night-cap
Or something adorned with lace—
With crochet, or with insertion—
A gentle form to grace.

But the Muse must repress her flying,
Folding her wings discreet,
And think of the clothes a-drying
As but for the hands and feet.

Lines that are written on linen,
As linen that hangs upon line,
Should be free as the air of the mountain,
And pure as the gold we refine.

A prop may be perfectly proper,
When Pegasus stoops to the pegs;
But stockings refreshed in the copper
Must never remind us of legs.

THREE WIZARDS AND A WITCH.

BY MRS. J. H. RIDDELL, AUTHOR OF 'THE SENIOR PARTNER,'
'GEORGE GEITH OF FEN COURT,' ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

SIR GEOFFREY'S OPINIONS.

APPARENTLY Mr. Gayre found his subject less easy than it seemed at first mention, for, instead of proceeding to say what he had to say, he repeated his former statement in a different form.

'Believe me, I played the part of eavesdropper quite unintentionally. It was impossible for me to help hearing your conversation.'

'No,' answered Susan, varying her monosyllable, but not its sense. 'It does not matter in the least,' she went on, imagining Mr. Gayre intended to convey some sort of apology. 'Lal spoke loud enough for all the world to hear.'

The banker laughed. 'That is quite true,' he said. 'Of course, Miss Drummond, it would be both impertinent and intrusive were I to make any remark on Mr. Hilderton's words. All I want to say is—'

'Don't say anything hard about poor Lal,' she interrupted. 'He is trying at times; but so few people understand him.'

'I think I do.'

'No, indeed, you cannot. Even to-night, for instance—' and then Lal's champion paused suddenly.

'Even to-night, for instance?' repeated Mr. Gayre, with quiet suggestiveness.

'I dislike half sentences, and yet I cannot finish mine,' said Susan. 'I may tell you this much, however,' she added, 'that

the day's festivities have tried his not particularly equable temper a good deal. After all, if you think over the position, it cannot be pleasant for a poor man who does possess genius to mix amongst people incapable of recognising genius till it is successful!'

'You bring me to the very point I wanted to reach,' replied the banker. 'I wish to help Mr. Hilderton to make the genius he undoubtedly possesses profitable; but I scarcely know how to set about the matter. He is a little "difficult."'

'Not a little—very,' amended Susan. 'So difficult, that I really sometimes fail to see how even his best friends are to put him in the straight road for fortune.'

'I am quite willing to try, if you assist me with a few hints. Knowing the interest—the *great* interest—you take in Mr. Hilderton's future, it would give me the sincerest pleasure to aid him by any means in my power.'

'I certainly like Lal,' answered Susan slowly, struck by something in her companion's tone—something implied which she instinctively felt she ought to show him she understood—'very much indeed; both for his own sake, and on account of old times; but—'

'I suppose one cannot expect a young lady to say more,' Mr. Gayre observed, almost as if by way of inquiry.

'I hope, Mr. Gayre, you don't imagine for a moment—'

'What, Miss Drummond?'

'That I care for Mr. Hilderton excepting as a friend? A dear friend, of course; but one who could never by any possibility be more to me.' Susan was a little angry, and spoke with a plain decision no man could really have misinterpreted.

Mr. Gayre did not, at all events, though it suited his purpose to ask,

'And why should I not imagine?'

'Because,' she answered, 'I thought you knew me better.'

Just for a moment there came a wild temptation over him to say he did, to cast his arms around her and strain her to his heart, and then and there, under the silent stars, with lights gleaming through the open windows above, and music floating down to where they stood, tell the tale of how love in middle age had come to him, and made life all beautiful and good and sweet, since a certain May day, when for the first time he saw Susan Drummond's fair dear face calmly watching the antics of Squire Temperley's hunter in Hyde Park.

But he was prudent; he did know her so well that he felt sure, if the faintest consciousness of liking him over-much had entered her mind, those charming lips would never have spoken the words which filled his heart with such delight. He would wait; he would not frighten, even by a gesture, this innocent, fearless, winsome bird, which seemed inclined to flutter towards him and settle on his hand.

'To be quite candid,' he answered, and in his voice there was no trace of the strong constraint he put on his speech, 'I thought I *did* know you better. It was an idea which would never have entered my own mind; but Mrs. Jubbins felt so sure, so satisfied—'

'Dear, kind Mrs. Jubbins,' murmured Susan. 'She has indeed been good to Lal.'

'Then there is really nothing in the affair?'

'Nothing whatever; nothing on either side,' she said eagerly, yet with a pretty confusion. 'Still, none the less, Mr. Gayre, you'll help him, won't you?'

None the less! If she could only have read his soul she would have understood all the more—a thousand times the more!

'I will do my best, my very best for him,' answered the banker earnestly; 'but you must help me, Miss Drummond. You will teach me how to give him hints and avoid offence.'

'Not a very easy task,' she declared; 'but I will try to teach you the geography of that very strange country, Lionel Hilderton's mind; that is to say, so far as I feel able,' she added, with an unintentional significance. 'And now you must not say I am like a child who does not know what it wants if I ask you to take me in again. I feel as much too cold as I did too warm ten minutes ago. The night air out here is chilly.'

'Wrap your shawl closer around you,' said Mr. Gayre anxiously. 'I am afraid you are not well. You have been over-exciting yourself.'

'Perhaps I have a little,' she agreed; 'but that is nothing, and I feel so much happier, so very much happier, since we talked about Lal. I don't know how to thank you enough; I don't indeed.'

Mr. Gayre could have told her; but once again he refrained. Who would willingly, even for reality, break the soft spell of such a dream as the man then revelled in?

'And so,' to change the subject,

he said, looking up at The Warren, 'you think Love would not be a suitable tenant for Lady Merioneth's cottage ?'

'Well, you see,' explained Susan, leaning a little on his arm as they ascended the slope, her head bent somewhat back, her eyes scanning the long terrace and the brilliantly-lighted windows, 'the poets, so far as I can remember, have never yet represented Love as a Millionaire.'

'What do you think of Mr. Sudlow as combining both characters ?'

'I may be wrong,' she answered, 'but I fancy he feels his position as a rich man too much to act the part of Cupid very naturally.'

'And yet he is deeply smitten with my niece.'

'So I see,' Susan agreed ; and they proceeded a dozen steps or more in silence.

They were ascending surely, if slowly, towards the house. Mingling with the tones of the music they could hear the voices of those guests who were pacing to and fro, or standing upon the terrace. Now there came to them the curious, muffled, yet continuous noise produced by a hundred light feet skimming over polished floors—a moment more and they were able to catch glimpses of the dancers themselves. Soon it would be all over, that brief time spent in paradise, which Mr. Gayre knew he should never, while life lasted, forget. Involuntarily, almost, he slackened his already tardy steps, and said,

'Do not walk so fast, Miss Drummond. You are tired.'

'Fast !' she repeated ; 'slow rather even for a snail ;' at the same time, however, following his example, while she turned a thoughtful dreamy face towards the gleaming lights and the laughing

groups, and the fitting figures as they appeared and disappeared within the rooms.

'If you could choose your lot in life,' asked the banker, breaking in upon her reverie, 'what would it be ?'

'You ask a very strange question,' said Susan, turning towards him a glance eloquent in its wistful astonishment.

'Do I ? And yet one I should imagine easily answered. We all have, or have had, I suppose, our dreams of what we should like life to prove. If some enchanter put it into your power to-night to select your path, where would you have it lie ? Across the hill-top or winding among lowly valleys ? Should you select to be rich and great, or humble and out of the battle ? Perhaps, like Agur, of whom we hear now so very little, you would pray for a happy mean ?'

'I don't think I should,' she replied.

'What would you ask for, then ?' he persisted. 'Wealth, power, love, genius ?'

She shook her head.

'Is it that you will not tell me, or that, never having thought the question out previously, you are unable to decide ?'

'I never have thought about the matter before,' she said. 'Still, I fancy I know what I should most wish to be able to do.'

'And that is ?'

'You must not laugh, Mr. Gayre, if I tell you—I could not bear you to laugh.'

'On my honour, I won't laugh, no matter how extraordinary your desire may seem.'

'I should wish, then—'

'Yes, Miss Drummond ?' for she stopped and hesitated.

'To be able to make the best of whatever lot was appointed for

me. If I were wise I know I should not ask for riches, or competence, or happiness, or talent, or renown; but simply that I should have strength and wisdom to be, not merely content in the state of life assigned me, but to make a "good thing of it," as Sir Geoffrey would say.' And for a moment, in the starlight, Mr. Gayre could see a smile wreath Susan's lips and chase away the grave shadows that had seemed to change the whole expression of her tender lovely face.

For a moment the banker was startled—actually startled. He had long felt the girl's daily life and practice to be a lay sermon; but he was scarcely prepared for such a confession of faith as that involved in the words she uttered. Just at first he did not understand, even dimly, what she meant, and days and weeks and months, and even years, were destined to pass before the man thoroughly comprehended youth in its ignorance may conceive a simple and sublime ideal that shall yet, with tears and struggles, with sorrow and pain, eventually impress something like the image of Divinity upon broken and contrite hearts, or souls worn, weary, and buffeted by the billows of temptation, by the agony of remorse!

Had he only known it, he was standing then under the starlight side by side with his better angel. Yet the world and the things of the world left him without other answer to her words than the question,

'Are you a fatalist, Miss Drummond? Do you believe we cannot even rough-hew the marble of our lives?'

'I believe,' she answered, 'that as we cannot forecast the events of the next twenty-four hours, as

we are unable to tell in the morning what may occur before night, "free will" resolves itself into whether we shall be good or bad children in our school and play-time. Fact is, Mr. Gayre,' added Susan, with a gaiety which had a touch of underlying sadness, 'I have been enjoying life too much lately, and so I want to prepare myself to bear the dark days bravely when they come—as come they must.'

'You add the Spirit of Prophecy to the Voice of the Preacher, Miss Drummond.'

'Thank you for listening to the words of both so gravely,' answered Susan; and as she spoke she would have taken her hand from his arm, and turned to enter the house by a glass door opening on a corridor which split the cottage in twain, and gave egress to all the reception and some of the principal bed rooms, had not Mr. Gayre detained her.

'Indeed, indeed,' he said, 'I meant no sarcasm. I feel there is truth underlying your words, though I confess I do not exactly comprehend them. Why should you, in your sunny youth, talk so wisely concerning dark days? Why should you, from whom all true men would keep even the knowledge of sin and trouble, imagine it could ever prove necessary for you to "make the best of your lot in life"?''

'Because I have known sorrow, and am certain I shall know more; besides, Mr. Gayre, even if such a thing were possible, I should not *like* to live a perfectly prosperous and easy life. One ought to see both sides.'

'True daughter of Eve, you want to pluck of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil! I really cannot recollect ever having heard you take so despondent a view of life before. Is it Mr.

Hilderton's poverty, or Mr. Sudlow's plenty, or this gay and festive scene, which causes you to regard existence as so utterly gloomy an affair?

She did not answer for a moment. Somehow, as he paused and listened, he felt rather than heard she was catching a sobbing breath; then, just as it seemed he could contain himself no longer, as if he must pour forth the full torrent he had so long restrained, she said, with a little touch of her usual vivacity,

'There are some people, you know, Mr. Gayre, on whom the spectacle of a crowd induces a far greater melancholy than the sight of a single corpse. Especially if the corpse has had anything to bequeath. Well, in a different way that is my case to-night. I suppose it is only because I am so tired that I project myself (that is a good word) to a time when not merely in those now brilliantly lighted rooms there won't be a single guest, but when I myself, Susan Drummond, shall feel

"Like one who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted."

Forgive me, Mr. Gayre; ah, I did not mean to make you gloomy too. I am going to Mrs. Jubbins; I want to ask her a favour.' And with a smile she left him at the porch, and crossing the wide hall made her way to the inner drawing-room, from which a few days before had proceeded the speech that struck Deputy Pettell dumb. Following close upon her Mr. Gayre saw the girl glide behind the easy-chairs and lounges where dowagers sat fanning themselves, and exchanging weighty confidences concerning household matters, and the perfections of their children, till she reached Mrs. Jubbins, standing near one of the

windows talking to Mr. Brown, who felt even his great mansion at Walton-on-Thames shrink into insignificance beside Lady Merioneth's 'little box,' into which, by a mere freak of Fortune, the widow had walked as 'copolly and unconcernedly as if she were as intimately acquainted with noblemen's houses as with the old place in Brunswick-square.' For a minute Susan stood quietly waiting, her face white as her dress, and a far-off yearning expression in those soft tender brown eyes the banker had never seen before. Then suddenly Mrs. Jubbins turning became aware of her presence. Whatever Susan's request, it was evidently granted with pleasure. The hostess touched the fair cheek with her fan, lingeringly, lovingly. Mr. Gayre could have blessed the buxom Eliza for that graceful caress. Then as Miss Drummond, threading her way back as dexterously as she had come, passed through the archway into the long drawing-room, where dancing was in progress, Mrs. Jubbins made some remark to the Walton-on-Thames Croesus the banker knew had kindly reference to his niece's friend.

Still standing by the door, he saw Susan's white dress flitting down the corridor. It went on and on, past the hall, past the dining and morning and billiard rooms, past the library and the state bedchambers; finally disappearing down a passage at right angles with the main gallery. Through the music, through the tip-tapping of the dancers' feet, through the buzz of conversation, and the clatter of plates, and popping of corks in the supper-room, he heard the closing of a distant door, and Susan Drummond did not again that night bless his sight.

What could have gone wrong? What was the matter with her? He waited and waited for her re-appearance, but waited in vain. All the guests who wished to catch the last train had gone. Weary chaperons were casting stern and reproachful glances at girls who persisted in just one dance more, one more still; even Mrs. Jubbins' prosperous face began to show signs of wear and tear. Amongst the musicians a man fell out occasionally to rest. The hours had told on the waiters, some of whom looked limp as to their cravats, and dishevelled about the head. Still the young people went on dancing fresh and gay, as though the party was just beginning; but Susan came not, and Mr. Gayre's anxiety and curiosity concerning what had become of her grew all the more intense, because he did not wish to ask any questions concerning the missing guest.

With discontented and cynical eyes he was looking at his niece as she floated to the melody of a ravishing waltz round one of the ballrooms, pioneered by that captivatingsinner Graceless, when one of the old Bloomsbury set, a contemporary of Mr. Jubbins, who had scores of times religiously played out rubber after rubber of whist in Brunswick-square, accosted him.

'Not dancing, Gayre?' began this individual, who was the human embodiment of snow in harvest; 'leaving it for the juniors? You're right—no fool like an old one, you know! Well, and what do you think of all this? Things were different in my day, and in yours too, for that matter. It is enough to make Jubbins turn in his grave. If your wise father had been alive we'd have seen nothing of this sort. He'd have read madam a lecture. There

are people here whose names would not be thought much of across a bill-stamp, eh? You've come to look after your niece, I suppose? Handsome girl! doesn't take after your side of the house, at any rate. But it is astonishing how hard it is to get men to marry beauties. They fight shy of them when it comes to that, and I am sure I don't wonder at it.

'Have you had any supper? I give you my solemn word I could not get a mouthful fit for any Christian man to eat till a quarter of an hour ago, when I seized the butler and made him bring me a cut of cold beef out of the larder, and a pint of draught ale. I knew their draught ale of old. Jubbins always dealt with Flowers, and she keeps up the charter. I shall be glad to be at home and in my bed, and I daresay you will, too. It is hard upon you, just when you must be beginning to feel you want rest and quiet, having that girl on your hands. However, Mrs. Jubbins will perhaps help you to get her off. She played her own cards so remarkably well, I daresay she can put your niece up to a thing or two. And so it was you looked out this fine place for the widow, eh? You know the sex! Give women their way about finery, and fashion, and folly, and you may lead them where you like by the nose. You're a sly dog, Gayre! Not a bad sort of place this to hang up your hat in for life, though the money that pays the rent was made out of dirty oil. You're a sly dog!'

Having emphasised which pleasant utterance with an evil chuckle and a dig in the ribs, the old friend of the family took himself off, leaving Mr. Gayre speechless with indignation.

'You look as if you had lost a shilling, and not found even sixpence,' said Sir Geoffrey, at this juncture taking up a position beside his brother-in-law. The Baronet was just beginning really to enjoy the evening. He had drunk himself sober, if such an apparent paradox is intelligible. It was a way Sir Geoffrey had, or rather, as he frequently explained, a way his constitution had. At the first start, when he began his libations—if that, indeed, could be ever said to begin which was only suspended by sleep—strong liquors did apparently produce an effect faintly simulating intoxication; but as time went on, these evidences of a weak brain disappeared totally.

'Fact is,' said Sir Geoffrey, 'drink steadies me.' He spoke of it as a seafaring person might of ballast. He did not roll when he had his due complement aboard, and he was extremely ingenious in accounting for the extraordinary phenomenon, that the more champagne, or brandy, or 'whatever was going' he swallowed, the soberer he became.

'It is like this, you know,' he declared: 'every family, I take it, must, in the course of a few generations, drink a certain amount; I daresay statistics could get at the amount. Well, then, don't you see, if three or four of the lot fail to take their fair share, there must at last come some poor devil of a scapegoat like myself, who has to drink for the lot. I call it hard, deuced hard! I am sure, even on the score of expense, I'd like to live on tea and lemonade; but Lord! when you've a constitution like mine to deal with, what are you to do?' A question so abstruse and so impossible to answer, that nobody tried to grapple with the difficulty presented by the singular nature of

Sir Geoffrey's internal arrangements.

In a state then of steadiness and comprehension a teetotaler might have envied, Sir Geoffrey, seeing Mr. Gayre part company with the Bloomsbury friend, sauntered across and made that remark anent the banker's shilling and sixpence expression of face.

Desirous, no doubt, of emulating the little busy bee, Sir Geoffrey lounged about the rooms, affably entering into conversation with utter strangers, and, indeed, helping to do the honours for Mrs. Jubbins, as he might had Lady Chelston gone to a better world, and the widow and himself been engaged. Now and then, in this chance ride across country, he met with a crushing retort or a nasty fall; and, from experience, he knew pretty well what 'the crusty, white-haired, and red-nosed old party had been saying to Gayre.'

'Deuced mixed lot, this,' he observed, with a solemn shake of his knowing head. 'I thought I'd seen a thing or two during the course of a life which has not been wholly spent in the quiet country; but hang me if I ever could have imagined such a set out as this!'

'It must, indeed, seem a change to you to find yourself among so many solvent and respectable people,' retorted Mr. Gayre, who was glad to vent his irritation on any one.

'That's right, pass the blow round, my lad! It does not hurt me,' said the Baronet. 'Solvent?' he went on, looking about him, 'no doubt of that; but respectable? h'm—m—m! I notice some folks here who, unless I am greatly out in my reckoning, have sailed uncommonly close to the wind. But then *their* haul was ten thousands, or hundreds of thousands, which makes all the

difference, Gayre, all the difference.'

'The whole thing is a confounded bore,' remarked his brother-in-law, who did not feel inclined at that moment to take up the cudgels for trade morality.

'Peggie's having the best of the fun of the fair,' observed that young lady's parent. 'I don't think she has been out one dance, and I have seen her send away would-be partners by the dozen. Lord, what a sly jade it is! How does she do it? Just a modest downcast look, and an uplifted appealing look, or the slightest turn of the shoulders, or an indolent movement of her fan, and she has all the men about her. I have been watching her, and wondering. It is extraordinary. That sort of thing would not attract me; but it seems to suit other people. It is not my style.'

'No, I don't think it is,' agreed Mr. Gayre, who knew too well the type of frisky and frolicsome young lady the Baronet delighted in.

'But she's a splendid girl,' proceeded Sir Geoffrey; 'just look at her now. Faith, in that dress—I wonder how much the bill for it will tot up to?—she looks like some rare tropical bird. Gad! what a splendid colour she has to-night, just like the inner leaves of a damask rose! And her feet—there is not a woman in the room has such a foot and ankle; all the Chelstons had good feet. Poor Margaret had pretty feet too, though a trifle low in the instep. Seriously now, Gayre, don't you think it's a thousand pities Peggie should be thrown away on mere wealth? She'd make a capital countess, and even as a duchess she would only be the right thing in the right place.'

'Well, if you know any stray earl or duke in want of a wife,

you might mention the matter to him,' suggested Mr. Gayre.

'I declare the more I see of Peggie, the less I feel I can bear the notion of her being wasted on such a fellow as Sudlow. Why, he's a perfect cad, and a stick in addition. He can't skate, and he can't ride, and he can't dance, and he can't shoot; what the deuce can he do?'

'Take care of his money,' answered the banker; 'and all I hope is he may give her a chance of helping him to take care of it also.'

'Well, I suppose we must make the best of a bad business,' said Sir Geoffrey, with religious resignation; 'I am sure I try to do so. I gave her a hint or two before we came here; I told her she must not neglect her opportunities. The worst of her is she's such a flirt, always was, always will be; I don't mean in any dangerous way—bless you, no! She'll take good care to get into no harm; I could trust Peg anywhere, trust her as I could myself; which, indeed, was saying so little for the charming Peggie's discretion, that Mr. Gayre had to turn away his face and hide a smile. 'I wish she'd some female relations up in all that sort of thing,' proceeded Sir Geoffrey, with an easy wave of his hand, indicating that he meant the art of securing eligible husbands, 'just to give her a chance; she wants training. Heavens! well schooled, she might marry whom she pleased. It's no use thinking of what's past; but if her poor mother—'

At which juncture the Baronet stopped and sighed, and shook his head and sighed again.

'Out of the fulness of your own abundant experience,' suggested Mr. Gayre, 'don't you think you might advise your daughter for

her good—tell her how to set about the great sport of hunting men?

'No, my dear fellow,' answered the Baronet, who, if he imagined his brother-in-law was sneering at him, took care not to seem cognisant of the fact. 'In the first place, to be truly successful, it should be pursued as a business, not a sport; and in the next, only a woman can really teach a woman how to deal with the other sex. If a man, now—yourself, for instance—stood in want of a few tips, couldn't I give them? and wouldn't I, with pleasure? But, bless my soul, your running is all straight enough. Here are you, and there's the widow; you've only to say "Come," and she'll come fast enough, and why the deuce you don't say it baffles me.'

'I must request, Sir Geoffrey—'

'O yes, I know all about that; but requests don't alter cases, and though you may insist on people shutting their mouths, you can't compel them to close their eyes. Well, she's as pleasant and hospitable a woman as I'd ever desire to meet, and I will say she, or somebody for her, has a judgment in the matter of wine I wish were universal. You'll weed out a lot of these people, no doubt,' and he nodded towards the room where what he called the 'old fogies' were 'playing at company.' 'Poor soul, she knows no better; but you'll teach her, Gayre—you'll teach her; and—she'll make an apt pupil,' having delivered which last opinion, the Baronet was turning away, probably to quite assure his mind as to whether Mrs. Jubbins' brandy was as good as her hock, when, inspired by a fresh idea, he paused to ask,

'By the bye, where's Susan? I haven't seen the little baggage for ages. She looked a bit bleached,

I thought, a while ago; wonder where she's got to? There's Lal Hilderton, face, as usual, black as a thunder-cloud. No doubt he knows. Hilderton—Lal—come here, can't you? Where's Susan?

'Haven't seen her for an hour or more.'

'Where the deuce can she be?' remarked Sir Geoffrey. 'How are you going to get back to your "diggings" to-night, Lal?'

'Irish tandem,' was the curt reply.

'Come and have something, then, to give your horses spirit for the journey,' said the Baronet, taking the young man's reluctant arm, and leading him tenderly towards the supper-room.

Where was Susan? where could she be? Miss Chelston did not know; for, pausing with Mr. Graceless close to where Mr. Gayre stood, she propounded the very question to her uncle he was longing to hear answered by some one.

'She is not going back to town to-night,' said Mrs. Jubbins, appearing at the moment Margaret was prettily expressing her wonder and astonishment. 'She's tired; she has been doing too much, and I've sent her to bed.'

For a second Miss Chelston looked at the speaker with incredulous surprise; then, seeing the hostess was not jesting, she pressed her fan against her chin, puckered her forehead, raised her eyebrows, murmured, 'I am so sorry,' and next moment the maize dress, with its splashes of colour, was whirling amongst the dancers, a dream of beauty and delight.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE WAY HOME.

'Poor Susan! poor, dear, kind, tiresome Susan!' lamented Miss Chelston. 'These are the sort of things she always would do. Almost kill herself to please people who scarcely considered it worth their while to say thank you; always ready to wear herself out for anybody.'

'I call the whole proceeding extremely silly, to say the least of it,' observed Mr. Sudlow.

'Do you?' said Mr. Gayre.

'Yes, I do,' retorted Mr. Sudlow, in a tone intended to convince young Graceless he was out of the banker's leading-strings at last.

'And what,' said Mr. Gayre, 'should you call the proceeding, if you said the most of it?'

'That's a question I decline to answer,' answered the gentleman tersely styled 'the cad' by Sir Geoffrey; hearing which valiant reply, Mr. Graceless burst out laughing.

They were all driving back to London together—Miss Chelston, Messieurs Sudlow, Graceless, and Gayre—with Sir Geoffrey on the box; three of the party in extremely bad temper, and one not too well pleased at finding himself booked as inside passenger for a fourteen miles' journey, unable to smoke, and thrown on the companionship of two men and a girl, with none of whom he had an idea in common.

As for Miss Chelston, she felt most truly it was the day after the fair. Such triumph as she had compassed was over, and her triumph could not, in such an assemblage, be considered great. Amid better surroundings, her beauty, her figure, her grace, her manner, her voice, must have placed her on a high rung of the social ladder; but upon the City

magnates she was thrown away. The old men regarded her merely as a good-looking girl without a fortune, who, no doubt, knew more about spending money than saving it; while their sons felt somewhat shy of a Baronet's daughter whose ways and looks and tones seemed different from the ways, looks, and tones of belles renowned in civic circles. She was the right thing among the wrong set of people. She had striven her best to please; she had smiled on the sons of prospective Lord Mayors; she had, in her quiet undemonstrative way, flirted with wealthy young stock-brokers and rising junior partners in great City houses; she had borne herself meekly towards large and portly mammas, and refrained from looking amazed at the doings of Cockney heiresses; and yet, when the sum of the day and evening was told, she felt her talents had not returned her even fair interest. If Mrs. Jubbins' party represented the best her uncle could do for her socially, bad indeed was the best. She had only really felt herself in a proper element while dancing with one or other of the 'fellows' Sir Geoffrey offered as his graceful contribution to the Chislehurst festivities; and as she knew too well what they were, and what they had, and that each of them was looking out for a flat, or an heiress, or both, on his own account, it goes without saying that even in the delicious curves of that final waltz with Mr. Graceless she was perfectly well aware nothing could ever come of such an acquaintance, save, perhaps, if hereafter she got into a safe and unexceptionable clique, a little shame and regret at ever having known so polished and presentable a blackleg.

With the result of the day's

proceedings Mr. Gayre felt, if possible, more dissatisfied than his niece. He had arrived at the conclusion that he did not understand Susan in the least; that she would require more careful management than he anticipated; that below her sweet amiability and charming frankness there lay a depth of character and a power of will, both of which it might be necessary to gauge and to conciliate. Time was when he thought he knew her thoroughly; day by day it was dawning upon him he really knew her less. The old qualities which had so captivated him on first acquaintance remained unchanged, but fresh and unexpected qualities were, in addition, constantly appearing. She was like a garden which a man first values for the sake of a few simple and homely flowers almost gone out of fashion, and behold, as the days go by, other plants thrust their tender leaves above ground, and he is kept in a constant state of uncertainty as to the manner of blossom which shall next appear.

As an acquaintance, even as a friend, perhaps she had drawn nearer to him; but as a lover, no. Mr. Gayre was too sensible a man, far too well learned in the lore of a world which contains both men and women, to blind himself to facts. Before he knew Susan Drummond he would have laid it down as a general proposition that all women were enigmas. Since he had known Susan he would have done battle on the point that he was acquainted with one woman who wore her heart on her sleeve; but now—now—now—Mr. Gayre could not exactly tell what to think. Leaning back in his corner, he felt sorely tempted to speedily put his fortune to the test, and 'maybe,' he considered, 'lose it all.'

O sweet Susan, sleeping that night among the Chialehurst woods, dreaming your maiden dreams in the house where noble lovers had kissed and been blessed, had wept and been parted till eternity, how was it possible for you to imagine a middle-aged man's heart was being rent because he failed to read aright your simple sincerity?

He felt wild to know his hands held no prize the girl seemed to account important. Wealth, rank, jewels, pleasure, idleness—the five curses and snares of womanhood—she held, apparently, of no worth whatever. What did her youth value, his middle age could give? Now he was beginning to understand her better, he saw Susan was prepared to sit down to the feast of life with a purpose of abstinence for which he could see no possible reason. She loved riding, dancing, society, travelling. Even to the simplest excursion she brought a zest and a sunshine he had never seen equalled. Yet he fully understood she expected at some not remote day to resign all chance of such pleasures, and live quietly at Enfield with her aunt.

'I mean to grapple with the mysteries of farming next year,' she said to Mr. Gayre one day. 'I don't think I could serve my country better than in trying to solve the problem of how to make land pay. Aunt cannot. I see where she goes wrong; but that is quite another matter from seeing how I am to go right.'

'I'll come over and help you,' offered Sir Geoffrey. 'I know all about farming. If my tenants would only have followed my advice I need never have left Chelston. Now they have got another landlord they wish, I'll be bound, they had considered me a little more. Do you re-

member, Susan, the talks your uncle and I used to have about cropping, and how he broke up the ten-acre lot, and sowed flax entirely on my advice?

'Very well indeed,' answered Susan demurely. She had good reason for remembering the circumstance, since, owing to dry soil and the utter impossibility of irrigation, the result proved a dead failure.

'I'll only make one stipulation,' proceeded the irrepressible Baronet—'that you lay in a cask of beer. I ask nothing more expensive. Hang it, there never was a man with simpler tastes! But water! and New River water, too! Fugh!' and Sir Geoffrey drew down the corners of his mouth—he could not turn up his nose, because it was aquiline—and pulled a grimace expressive of the most intense disgust.

'I must talk to my aunt about the ale,' said Susan.

'Come, you don't mean to say, my girl, you are going to turn yourself out to grass like Nebuchadnezzar, and drink nothing stronger than water, as if you were a cow or a dog? Why, even a horse knows better. Gad! I wouldn't keep a brute that refused honest liquor.'

Susan and Mr. Gayre simultaneously broke into a peal of laughter.

'I am growing rather in love with teetotalism,' said the former. 'It is cheap and healthful.'

'The cheapness I admit, but the health I deny,' retorted the Baronet. 'I only know one fellow who denies his blood natural nourishment, and he's covered with as many boils and blains as Job; only Job got cured, and he never will. Serve him right, too!'

Once, when opportunity offered, Mr. Gayre hazarded an inquiry

to Sir Geoffrey concerning the why and the wherefore of Miss Drummond's conviction that she would have to content herself with a humdrum existence and very modest surroundings, and though the answer he received seemed to him scarcely satisfactory, it was at least plausible.

'Susan's a confoundedly sensible sort of a girl,' said the Baronet. 'Always was. Bless you, I used to call her little old woman when she wasn't more than eight hands high. She ought to have been a big heiress, a fine haul for some lucky young fellow; but the house in which her father left his money went smash, and she never got a penny out of the wreck but a beggarly two thousand pounds. Her uncle Drummond was a man who could not save a farthing—most extravagant old dog; so when he died, and the son came into the estate, there was poor Susan adrift with about sixty pounds a year, and no near relation except the ancient party at Enfield. Many a girl would have broken her heart; but that's not Susan's way. She'll make the best of a bad bargain, and when that young Arbery's gone back to the Antipodes take sole management.'

'Yes, I understand all that,' replied the banker; 'but why should she speak as if she was going totally out of society? Now, she comes here, for instance; why should she imply she will not be able to continue to do so?'

'Well, for two reasons, I suppose: one, I don't fancy the aunt will care to be left alone; another, Susan knows Peggie must marry; and she's not so blind as to imagine my good daughter would care for her as a constant or even occasional inmate. Peg's jealous of her, that's the truth.

Besides, Susan's not grand enough, or rich enough, or dressy enough, or stuck up enough to please her ladyship. Yes, you may stare, but though Peggie's my own child, I can see her faults. I don't know where she gets them, upon my soul, I don't—not from me; and as for her poor mother, if your sister hadn't much wit, at any rate she was a loving, clinging creature. You mayn't believe it, Gayre, but I've often felt very sorry for Margaret. Most men would only think of themselves, but, thank Heaven, that's not my way; and Sir Geoffrey paused, either because he was stricken dumb with the contemplation of his own merits, or because he wished to give his brother-in-law time to recover from the astonishment he believed such unparalleled magnanimity might well excite.

Whatever his emotions, Mr. Gayre controlled them admirably.

'Still, I fail to comprehend Miss Drummond,' he persisted. 'Most girls look forward to marriage as an end to all difficulty, the beginning of a brilliant and delightful existence. Why should she not feel certain that a husband as rich and handsome as Cinderella's prince will one day cross her path?'

'Because, as I told you before, Susan is as wise as Solomon. She knows well enough it is not so easy to pick up a rich husband, and if it were, clever though she is, she is not the sort of girl to hook a big fish. Besides, her own sense must tell her that if Peggie, a baronet's daughter and so forth, hangs fire, she has not much chance of going off to any good purpose. Fact is,' went on Sir Geoffrey, shaking his remarkable head till his hat actually quivered, 'men can't afford to marry nowadays, unless the lady

brings something in her hand, and something considerable too. There's no end to the expenses of a married man. They begin with the engagement ring, and they don't end when he is screwed down in his coffin. It's no joking matter, I can tell you. Men don't care a straw, at this date of the world, what a girl is; what they want to be told is what she has. For himself, a man is always worth his own value in the matrimonial market, but a woman isn't; there's such a deuce of a lot of them!'

Mr. Gayre was thinking of these utterances, and many more, as they drove steadily on through the chill twilight of that summer's night, when suddenly the carriage stopped, and Sir Geoffrey shouted to some one they had just passed, 'Jump up, man; we'll make room for you on the box; you've done enough for glory; come along!'

'Thank you, I'd rather walk,' answered a sulky voice, which belonged to Lionel Hilderton, and none other.

'With my left leg for leader,
And right leg for wheeler,
I'll distance all racers, says Pat.
Hoo-roo!

I'll distance all racers, says Pat,' chanted the Baronet, 'Don't be a fool, Lal,' he added, in sober prose. 'It's thirteen miles from here to Camden Town, if it's a step. If you have no mercy on yourself, have some on your boots!'

Even Susan Drummond could scarce have found an apology for the reply to Sir Geoffrey's genial speech, which, though muttered, was distinctly audible to every person in the carriage.

'Have your own bad way, then, my friend,' retorted the Baronet; 'I'll not baulk you. Walk and be ——!'

'Poor Mr. Hilderton!' exclaimed Miss Chelston as they drove on.

'Lovely woman!' commented Mr. Sudlow.

'Yes, it's what we are all bound to go through,' said Mr. Gayre, who, having now a perfect knowledge of the name of that lovely woman, derived the keenest enjoyment from Mr. Sudlow's remark.

'And the most delightful part of the business is, that by this time next year he will be thinking what a special Providence it was that she refused to smile on him,' capped young Graceless.

'I hope you like *that*, my lady,' thought Mr. Gayre, striving in vain to catch a glimpse of his niece's face.

Almost in silence the dreary journey was got through somehow. If there ever had been a time when Mr. Graceless enjoyed the society of a respectable woman it was long past; and after the utterance of a few commonplace phrases, he began to think what a nuisance it was he could not smoke, to wonder whether the old City 'duffer' would stand to the bargain made with Sir Geoffrey, how much the Baronet would expect for his share of the spoil; and finally, exhausted by these mental labours, he fell asleep, for doing which he afterwards apologised by explaining he had 'made a long day,' viz. thirty-four hours, not having gone to bed at all on the night preceding Mrs. Jubbins' party.

As for Mr. Sudlow, he was in a white heat of rage at the presence of this interloper. He felt jealous, envious, disappointed. Although Miss Chelston had, during the early part of the day, shown him a good deal of favour, when once dancing commenced he found himself put somehow out of court. Graceless, without a sovereign in his pocket, was, in a ballroom, a greater man than Mr.

Sudlow; and not merely Graceless, but all the guests introduced by Sir Geoffrey.

'They dance like *seraphs*!' said one gushing young lady to the disgusted Dives, who did not dance like anything on earth or in heaven except like himself, who walked through a quadrille with the solemn grace of a poker, and extracted, apparently, a vast deal less pleasure out of a wild gallop than he would have done from a religious procession.

'He likes no concert where he can't play first fiddle,' said the Baronet, afterwards summing him up; and as he certainly did not do that at The Warren, it goes without saying Mr. Sudlow's enjoyment of the evening's proceedings was not of an ecstatic character.

On and still on, weary mile after weary mile; the gray dawn came raw and miserable; objects by the wayside began to be visible, and it was with a jaded feeling of relief the revellers found themselves at last jolting over the London stones. How hard and cold the river looked in the first beams of the morning sun! What a blessed sight the Houses of Parliament seemed, holding as it did an assurance Middlesex was reached once more! On and still on. What an endless distance they appeared to have driven! How cramped and stiff they felt! How exasperatingly maddening Sir Geoffrey's cheery and wide-awake tones sounded, as he hailed his brother-in-law to ask,

'Shall we go round by Wimpole-street, Gayre? Drop you at your door with pleasure.'

'Certainly not,' answered Mr. Gayre; 'we'll get out here;' and, suiting his action to his word, he opened the carriage-door and stepped out, leaving Mr. Sudlow to follow his good example.

'I'll take your place now,' said the Baronet, jumping down from the box. 'It's getting a bit chilly. No, Graceless, keep where you are; we'll find you a sofa, never fear. Hope you'll be none the worse, Mr. Sudlow; by-by, Gayre!' and Sir Geoffrey put up the window, and remarked to all whom the intelligence might concern that it was deucedly cold.

'What does he mean by it?' was the astounding question Mr. Sudlow put to his companion as the carriage rolled away.

'What does who mean by what?' asked Mr. Gayre, in amazement.

'Your brother-in-law! What does he mean by taking that fellow Graceless to his house

and talking about finding him a sofa?'

'Are you mad, Mr. Sudlow?' said the banker. 'Do you suppose Sir Geoffrey Chelston cannot ask any one he likes to his house without your permission?'

'He has no business to allow his daughter to associate with such a man.'

'May I inquire by what right you presume to dictate with whom his daughter shall associate? What is Miss Chelston to you, that you should even express an opinion on the subject? You are tired and a little irritable, Mr. Sudlow; so I will only say, then, that it seems to me you have of late, more than once, strangely forgotten yourself!'

(To be continued.)

OUR DOCTOR.

BY AN ARTILLERY OFFICER.

CHAPTER I.

He was the strangest man I ever met, and one sees a good many curious specimens of human nature in the army; but such a mixture of good and bad, of the noblest qualities and the most degrading vices, as were united in Dr. Repton, I never expect to find again, nor, indeed, should I care to do so, for a character like his is too puzzling to the intellect and too unsettling to the mind to be altogether pleasant.

We were quartered in Elizabeth Castle at Jersey when first I met him. It was a desolate place then, and I don't know that it has much improved since, or, indeed, that anything could improve it short of a convulsion of Nature, seeing that it is founded on a little island of its own, and only connected with the land once a day at low water, by a mile or so of rock-strewn sand, unpleasant to the foot and aggravating to the temper. In so isolated a spot it was very necessary to have everything pertaining to the comfort of the men in the fort itself, and so we were provided with school, hospital, and chapel, all complete. Religion being in the British army almost entirely a matter of Sundays, the chaplain was able to live at his ease in St. Helier's; but, after a long period of years, the authorities discovered that accidents did now and then occur, that men got apoplectic fits and delirium tremens at the most inconvenient times, and that chil-

dren were occasionally born into the world at hours that could not be laid down in orders. On the whole, then, it was at length determined that a doctor should be sent to live in the fort. And so he came.

Our battery was, for a wonder, complete in its roll of officers just then, and, what was a greater wonder still, all of them were unmarried, so that we had a better muster at mess than the castle usually saw. I shall just mention their names here; perhaps I may have a word to say as to their individualities on some future occasion. They were Major Anstey, Captain Urmston, and Lieut. Cayley. The other subaltern was myself. It is a generally recognised rule that every officer in the Royal Artillery is mad, married, or Methodist; and the second being out of the question, we had our choice of the other two alternatives. I cannot attempt to decide here to which class we belonged.

We were sitting at dinner one evening, when the messman brought in a card. On it was written simply 'E. M. Repton, Army Medical Department.' I wondered at the time at the absence of the usual prefix of 'Mr.,' but it was characteristic of the man, as I found out afterwards.

Of course we invited him in at once, only too glad to see a new face. It is wonderful how tired of each other three or four men can become, when they are forced by pressure of circumstances to

live much in each other's company. If they are good-tempered they settle down to a passive endurance of their neighbours' particular hobbies; if otherwise, to a miserable succession of quarrels and mutual annoyances. I have seldom seen a true friendship spring up under such conditions of intimacy. It is the old story: to have a real friend the less you see of him and he of you the better.

But I am forgetting the doctor, who is all this time standing in the doorway ready to be introduced to my readers. He was a tall man of about forty years of age, strongly made, with a pleasing face enough; clean-cut features, a trifle hard, perhaps; gray eyes; and a long, drooping, black moustache already turning to white. He had a high intellectual forehead, whose lines could be well traced, for his hair was very thin and scanty, and brushed back so as not to make the most of what he still possessed. He was dressed in a suit of dark tweed, very baggy at the knees and very shiny about the seams, and, altogether, he looked like a man decidedly down in the world. Still, he had about him that *esse* of manner, or whatever it may be called, which even at first sight distinguishes a gentleman.

Having shaken hands with us all, and apologised for his late intrusion, he sat down to the table with us. He had only just been able to get across to the castle, he said, as the causeway had not opened until half-past six, or he would have joined us sooner. His baggage he had sent over the day before, in order to have his room a little furnished previous to his arrival.

'You are not a married man, then, doctor?' said Major Anstey.

I thought I saw a slight change

in the expression of the gray eyes, as he answered, 'No, Major; I am quite of Sir Dinadan's opinion about that.'

This was promising, I thought. The man must be a well-read one, or he would not have referred to a book so little known as the *Morte d'Arthur*. Evidently I was the only person who understood the allusion, but I did not care to say so. I had learned by experience that men do not like others to know more than themselves, and that, for the sake of peace and comfort, the less knowledge of literature that was displayed in the mess-room the better.

No one having responded to his remark, the doctor went on with his dinner. I noticed that he tried two or three topics of conversation, until he struck on one which seemed to suit his company, and then enlarged on that with a good deal of ability and witty sarcasm. I sat quiet, not being exactly sure whether he was really deriving information from the others or laughing at them. I half suspected the latter, and had no mind for it. I am afraid I was a very conceited specimen of humanity at that period, and thought myself superior, both in talents and acquirements, to my companions. I determined that I would get the doctor all to myself some day, and see what he was made of.

When the dinner-things were removed, our new acquaintance expressed his intention of going to see how his room was getting on, and whether his furniture had been safely unpacked. We bade him good-night, and settled down to a smoke, and a talk over him. On the whole, the verdict was favourable, though Captain Urms-ton, who was himself something of a dandy, wondered how on earth he could wear such seedy

clothes; and Major Anstey remarked that, considering the time he had been in the room, he had managed to get through a good many glasses of sherry. Then we had our usual rubber of whist, and after that I went to bed.

Next morning we had a gun-drill parade—three hours' weary manœuvring of two forty-pounders in the barrack-square. When it was over I exchanged my uniform for plain clothes, and went to look up the doctor in his quarters.

They consisted of two rooms in the same block of buildings as my own. I knocked at the door, a hoarse voice cried, 'Come in,' and I entered.

I have always found that in no way can you obtain a better clue to the real character of a man than by a careful and discriminating study of the manner in which he furnishes his dwelling, above all, if he be a lover of books. Show me the books that a man cares to carry about with him, the music he cares to play and the songs to sing, and the pictures he loves to look at, and I will give you a fairly correct sketch of what he is himself. Even so long ago as the time about which I now write, I had accustomed myself to such observation, and therefore it is that I can paint Dr. Repton's room to-day as clearly as though it were still before me. This was what I saw.

One side of the chamber was occupied by an ordinary barrack bedstead standing against the wall. Near the head was the usual officer's portable washhand-stand, very much the worse for wear. Above the latter hung an exquisite copy of a Madonna, by Fra Angelico. There was a bookcase between the windows, containing, as I could see at a glance, a strange medley of volumes, profes-

sional, artistic, literary, and romantic, mingled with French novels and scurrilous song-books. Here were Dante's *Vita Nuova* and Gautier's *Mademoiselle de Maupin* side by side, Browning's poems and Alfred de Musset, Swinburne's early works and Jean Ingelow, *Two Years Ago* and *Nana*. Such a mixture of the best and the worst, the highest and lowest ideals at once, I had never seen before.

Over the fireplace hung a picture by some French painter, a 'Cléopâtre,' treated with all the sensual power of the school to which it belonged. It just faced the Madonna on the opposite wall, and the two types of womanhood seemed to be regarding one another with hostile eyes. On a small table in the corner stood a row of bottles whose labels betrayed their contents, a tumbler, and a decanter of water. This, with the addition of an easy-chair or two, made up the furniture of the apartment. Through the open door I could see that the other room was occupied only by a pile of packing-cases. Evidently the doctor was not going to use it at all; he was content with his single chamber.

When I entered, he was standing by the fire with a violin in his hand, idly trying some intervals on the string without using the bow.

He looked round as I opened the door, and laid down the instrument.

'Good-morning, B.,' said he. 'I saw you from the window playing at soldiers with the guns in the square. Have something to drink?'

I declined, on the plea of its being too early in the morning. Repton, however, filled for himself a stiff tumbler of brandy-and-water, sat down in an easy-chair,

motioned me to another, and began to talk.

'Pleasant sort of place this castle of yours seems to be. You don't suffer much from over-excitement in it, I should think. Ah, I see you are admiring my "Cleopatra." Is it not a fine picture?'

I confessed that I did not much care for the style of the subject, and that as to the actual painting I was no judge of its merits.

'Such as it is, it cost me fifty pounds,' said the doctor; 'at least, that was the price that worthy descendant of Abraham, Solomon Levi, put upon it when he handed it over to me as part-payment for one of my valuable autographs.' Then wheeling his chair round, and looking at me inquiringly, he asked, 'Is its counterpart, the "Madonna," then, more to your taste?'

'Very much more,' I answered. 'I only wonder that you can keep the "Cleopatra" and it in the same room.'

'Why not? I have seen women like both of them. Every one has his own taste; and if I have not quite made up my mind as to which mine may be, I have just double the pleasure out of the combination. Don't you see what I mean?'

'I hear what you say, at any rate,' I replied; 'but as to the two tastes coexisting, I don't believe it.'

'Ah, well, then you have something to learn yet,' he answered. 'What do you suppose all the old monsters that our forefathers used to believe in signified, unless it were just such a mixture of qualities? *Desinit in piscem mulier formosa superne!* You understand Latin, no doubt, and know what that means. I find that the highest and lowest meet closely enough in most people.'

'If they do,' said I, 'one must overpower the other before long; and it is likely to be the worse of the two. A rotten apple will make a great many sound ones decay; but I never heard of a sound one, or any number of them, making a decayed one good.'

I was rather proud of having hit upon, as I thought, so unanswerable a symbol; but Repton only laughed.

'I'll tell you what, B.,' said he, 'of all forms of argument, the worst is that of similes. It is the mode women always adopt, because it sounds plausible and is easy of application. I will give you as good a one as yours on the opposite side. They make "eau de millefleurs" out of the liquid refuse of cowhouses, as I daresay you know. You would have a man with only one side to his nature, and when you get one, I wish you joy of him; but for my part, I am inclined to say he is not to be found at all. I am a drunken old blackguard, and I don't much care who knows it; but I can appreciate a good woman, or a piece of Beethoven's music, or a fine poem, as well as any one else. There is no such thing in nature as a refined taste degraded, as you seem to think. Because I can go to a music-hall and listen to a song that the parsons would call demoralising, and amuse myself with it, do you think I care any the less for hearing a cathedral anthem the day after? Not a bit! I like them both in their own way. I grant you the anthem is the best music, and the cathedral is the best place; but I can enjoy both, and I say that, if I can, I am distinctly superior to the man who has room in his nature for only one.'

'Well, I can only say that I don't agree with you,' I answered. 'But

I didn't come here to argue. I got an invitation from Lady Thomas this morning for a picnic at St. Aubin's, and she tells me to bring our new doctor with us if he has come. Should you care to go? Urmoston and I mean to take a trap out there about one o'clock.'

Dr. Repton looked at me with a quizzical expression of countenance.

'Wouldn't you like me to go with you and be introduced as your friend?' said he. 'In the very identical suit that I wore last night, for instance. I saw you all looking hard at its defects. I can tell you it was good material once, like the man inside of it, though it does look seedy enough now.'

'I don't mind how a man dresses so long as he is a gentleman,' I answered, warming up a little. 'I brought you a civil invitation, and put it as civilly as I could, and for my part I should have liked your company; but, as you choose to consider me a snob, I won't ask you again!' And I turned towards the door with the air of a martyr.

Repton coolly got up, turned the key in the lock, removed it, and sat down.

'You and I are not going to part in that way,' he said. 'I sincerely beg your pardon, B., if my chaff offended you; but I didn't mean it. I thought when I saw you last night that you were a cut above those other fellows. Sit down, man, and we will have a reasonable talk together. As for your invitation, it is many a day since I went anywhere in society, and I am not going to begin it again. It didn't suit me, nor I it, when I tried it last. I hope you will come round to my room in the mornings, whenever you can; I like some one to talk to. I am not always

fit for company in the afternoon.' Here, to emphasise his assertion, he filled himself another tumbler of brandy-and-water.

'I will come in with pleasure now and then,' I said; 'but I wish you would tell me one thing, if it be not a rude question. How can you, an educated man, deliberately set yourself down to get drunk, when you know, as a doctor, that it will ruin both your health and your intellect? You see, I don't accuse you of it myself; I only go by what you told me just now.'

He laughed a little.

'When you can tell me, B., why you do half the actions of life—why you came into the service, where you have the maximum of discomfort and the minimum of pay; why you are going to this picnic this afternoon, to talk nonsense to ladies and eat your luncheon off a tin plate, without salt or mustard most likely, when you might have it comfortably at home; above all, when you can tell me why you will, in all probability, follow the ordinary course of human nature some day, and fall in love with a woman no better nor worse than a hundred others you have met and *not* fallen in love with—then, perhaps, I may answer your question. Meanwhile, you must take it for granted that no one acts exactly as his reason tells him is best, or practises what he preaches in this world. But I see you want to be going, so I will open the door. I beg your pardon for locking it, but it was the only way to keep you in whilst I made my apology. Mind, you promised to come and look me up again.'

'I certainly shall,' said I. 'Good-bye for the present. I suppose I shall see you at mess to-night?'

'I don't think so,' he replied.

'I don't intend to belong to the mess. It wouldn't suit my habits of living at all, and I should only get turned out of it in the end. I couldn't well afford it either.'

'Well, it's time for me to go and meet Urmston,' I said. 'We are going over by the twelve-o'clock boat.'

I left the room with my confidence in my powers of reading character considerably shaken.

CHAPTER II.

WE didn't see much of the doctor for a while after his arrival. He kept pretty close to his own quarters, and had a knack of crossing over in the boat at times when no one else was going. Plainly he wished to avoid the officers, and many were the criticisms directed at him in consequence. Urmston had looked out his name in the *Army List*, and found that, though forty years of age, he was still only a surgeon. Thereon evidently hung a tale, but it was a tale that none of us could guess at. We heard rumours now and then of his drinking propensities, but nothing very definite. I was away at Fort Regent on the mainland, mounting guns every morning, and had no chance of calling on him again.

One evening I had been out rather later than usual, as the bridge was open and I could walk back. I got to the castle about half-past nine, and was going to my quarters, when I heard a great noise going on in the doctor's room. The door was half-open, and I looked in, sure of not being seen myself, as the passage was dark.

It was a curious sight. Repton had gathered together a miscel-

laneous assemblage of gunners and officers' servants, and was entertaining them to his heart's content. He had placed a barrack chair on the top of his table, and seated himself in it, and was now playing vigorously the waltz of 'Ehren on the Rhine,' to which one or two couples were dancing, whilst the rest looked on with the solemn faces of men who had reached that state of drunkenness when it just occurs to them to wonder whether they are sober. The doctor himself was rather the worse for liquor, as I could see. I noticed that he had turned the Madonna with the face towards the wall.

Just as I looked in, the waltz came to an end by the snapping of one of the violin-strings. The player made a few futile attempts to repair the damage, and then laid the instrument down on the table.

'The old fiddle's gone, boys,' he said, 'and I'm too drunk to mend it; but I'll give you a song instead. Mind you all join in the chorus.'

Amidst great acclamation he began to sing, in a fine baritone, a music-hall ditty of more than usual grossness. Those who were sober enough joined in with a will at the end of each verse, and the noise was tremendous. In the midst of it came the discordant notes of the trumpet in the barrack square, sounding the tattoo. The chorus came to a sudden close.

'Bundle out now, every mother's son of you!' cried the doctor. 'I'm not going to have a picket coming into my rooms to fetch you. Those who are sober help those who are drunk. Out with you, now!'

I did not want to be caught in the passage, so I hastily gained my room, not waiting to see the

result of these ingenious arrangements. Half an hour afterwards I heard a tap at my door, and Repton's voice asking, 'Are you asleep, B.?' I made no answer, as I was utterly disgusted with the evening's proceedings. He did not come in, and I thought I heard a sigh as he turned away. Of this, however, I could not be sure.

When I returned from Fort Regent next day, I found that, as was only to be expected, there had been a very decided 'row' in my absence. Five men had been confined for drunkenness the evening before, and the case had been reported to the General, who had sent for the culprit to the district office. What took place there did not transpire; but the morning after, on passing Repton's room, I saw a good-conduct badge nailed up on the outside of the door, with the inscription above it, 'Lost this 20th day of September 18—,' and underneath, the German words (I suppose inserted in that language as he knew none of the senior officers understood it), 'Wer nicht hat von dem wird auch genommen, das er hat!' Certainly the doctor did not display much repentance.

I presume the General had given him a pretty severe reprimand, for we had no more evening-parties at the castle. I heard, however, from different sources, that he had become a most popular visitor in the numerous public-houses at St. Helier's, and that himself and his fiddle were eagerly sought after by the proprietors, who found them unvarying attractions to the sailors and soldiers who frequented their dens. Other facts I heard too—of care for the sick as tender as a woman's, and of skill that was always to be had by the poor for the asking. I scarcely credited

such stories till one day, when a man at Fort Regent got his arm badly crushed by the fall of a gun, and the doctor was sent for. By the time he had arrived the sufferer had been laid on a comrade's bed in the barracks, and lay there moaning with pain. Repton examined the limb and said little, but put the man under chloroform, and set the fractured bone. When it was over he called me out of the room.

'It is a bad case, B.,' he said. 'I fear the poor chap will lose his arm. Is there any one here who knows anything of nursing? I do not want to move him, and he will require a good deal of care.'

I knew of no one, and said so.

'Well then, I'll stop with him myself for this night, at any rate. I sha'n't be wanted at the castle, and I can look after him better than a gunner would.'

He stopped with him that night, and many nights after, having obtained leave to sleep out of barracks. All that time he kept perfectly sober, and attended his patient as though he had been his dearest friend. The arm was saved in the end. The night after the sufferer was moved back to the castle, his nurse went to town, and, as I heard afterwards, held a great merry-making at a tavern near the Victoria Pier, which ended in a free fight, and an arrest of most of the rioters. He himself, however, escaped through the good offices of his host, who, fearing to lose a guest who brought so much custom to his house, stowed him away in a cupboard till the police were gone.

Of course, this kind of thing could not be allowed to go on. The General heard of it privately, and communicated with the authorities, asking to have the doctor

transferred to some other station ; and the result was that Repton came into my room one morning, holding in his hand a blue official envelope containing orders to hold himself in readiness to sail at once for Barbadoes.

'They think I'll be well out of the way there,' said he, 'and that the climate will soon finish me. I daresay it will, but what matter? That is as good a place to die in as any other. I want you to say nothing about my orders yet awhile ; the news will spread fast enough, and I have one or two friends here who will be sorry for it. I shall have to leave for Southampton about the end of the week, I expect, and I shall get away as quietly as possible.'

I was very sorry to hear the news. With all his faults and inconsistencies I had grown to like the doctor, and was grieved at the idea of losing him. Moreover, I had an uneasy feeling in my mind that I had not done as much for him as I might. I could not tell him so now, however ; it was too late for that, or for trying to repair my fault.

As he expected, he was ordered to leave on Saturday of the same week. I promised to see him off, and for that purpose went over to St. Helier's to sleep at an hotel the night previous, as the boat left before daybreak. Dr. Repton was stopping at the same house, but went off in the evening to some of his old haunts, and I saw nothing of him till we met at breakfast.

It was a cold misty morning, with a strong wind blowing straight into the harbour, and the piers and the deck of the steamer looked indescribably wet and miserable in the sickly light of the lamps. There were few passengers ; nevertheless, at that early hour, I noticed a little group of

people standing by the gangway. When we drove up they surrounded the carriage, and fell upon the doctor with tears and lamentations that betrayed their Irish origin. He could scarcely free himself from them, though the whistle was sounding, and the sailors and porters were looking on with unconcealed amusement at the scene. One thinly-clad woman, standing apart from the group, and shivering in the chill sleety rain, shook hands with him again and again before she would let him go.

'Now then, sir, steamer's just off!' cried an authoritative voice on board. Repton tore himself away from his friends at last, and took my hand.

'Good-bye, B.,' he said, 'and God bless you! Coming from me, I don't know whether that will do you much good ; but it can't do harm. I have left you something to remember me by at the castle—you wouldn't have taken it if I had offered it to you. Keep it, like a good fellow ; it was an old friend of mine.'

There was no more time for words. The gangway was slid in, the paddles revolved, there was a general waving of handkerchiefs and caps on the pier, and the doctor was gone.

When I got back to the fort I found his Madonna in my room. He had written my name and the date on the back, but had omitted his own. Lower down I saw an older inscription in faded ink, almost illegible. With the help of a magnifying-glass I made out the words, 'Ernest Repton, from Madeline.' On the face of the picture was the signature, 'Madeline Linton pinxit.' I never knew more than that of the doctor's history.

What has become of him since I cannot tell. I never saw any-

notice of his death or retirement in the papers; but his name has long since vanished from the pages of the *Army List*. I should like to think that I shall meet him again some day, but I fear the chances are against it. Per-

haps, after all, it is better that I should remain in ignorance. He had noble qualities and great abilities, and I should be sorry to know as a certainty that he had wasted them to the end.

AT THE ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

Wit, and grace, and an exquisite face,
 A 'hauteur' fit for a throne,
 A smile of scorn, of a grand pride born,
 But—a heart of ice, and not of stone.

Exotics rare in her golden hair,
 In her splendid bouquet set:
 Doth she e'er think now of our tender vow
 O'er a simple violet?

No! The broad 'grand tier' is above my sphere.
 As well might a Pleiad dream
 That her light could vie with the sun on high,
 Or a lamp with the moonlight gleam.

Full well I know that her heart is snow,
 That she is a statue fair;
 That with her doth hold the first rank bright gold,
 That true love is a thing of—air.

A thing that we dreamt, in a sweet green lane,
 In the dear old days of yore;
 But a happy lot, to be balanced not
 Against weight of the golden ore.

Ah, can it be that a thought of me
 For a moment brings the gleam
 Of a sweet surprise to those dewy eyes?
 Away with the idle dream!

Mid the courtly throng, to the 'queen of song,'
 As the queen on Beauty's throne,
 Lists she so fair with a listless air;
 And I—well, I am—ALONE!

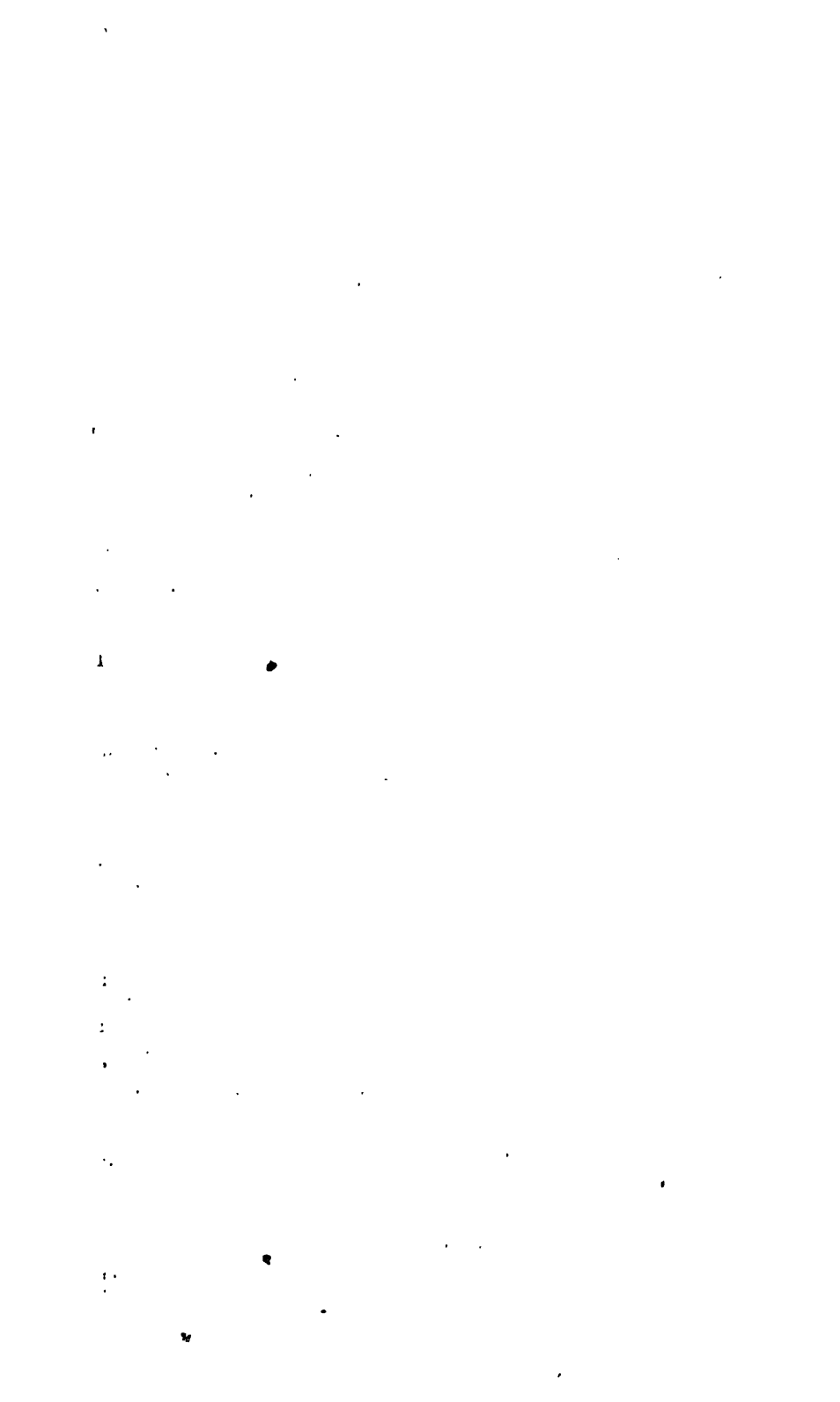
A. H. B.





JOHN HENRY LEIGH HUNT.

See 'Rainy-Day Poetry.'



RAINY-DAY POETRY.*

By LEIGH HUNT.

(*With a Portrait.*)

—♦—
'Dicescit ab astris
Humor, et ima petit.'—LUCAN.

'Humour sets the welkin free,
And condescends with you and me.

CRITICS lament over a number of idle rhymes in the works of Swift, that they may come under the above title; and wish, at least, that they had never been published. They designate them as the sweepings of his study, his private weaknesses, unworthy of so great a genius, and exclaim against his friends for collecting them. I really cannot see the humiliation. If he had written nothing else, there might be some colour of accusation against him; though I do not see why a dean is bound to be a dull private gentleman. But if he had written nothing else, I think it may be pretty safely pronounced that he would not have written these trifles. They bear the mark of a great hand, trifling as they are. Their extravagance is that of power, not of weakness; and the wilder Irish waggy of Dr. Sheridan, slatternly and muddled, stands rebuked before them. What should we have done had we lost Mary the Cook-maid's Letter, and the Grand Question about the Barracks? These, to be sure, are expected by everybody; but I like, for my part, to hear all that such an exquisite wag has to say.

* Some eight years ago an American publisher gathered together Leigh Hunt's 'Wishing-Cap Papers.' The volume is but little known in this country. It contains many charming specimens of the versatile author, of which 'Rainy-Day Poetry' is one. We shall recur to the book.

I except the coarseness of two or three pieces, which I never read. I wish the critics could say as much. I have such a disgust of this kind of writing that there are poems, even in Chaucer, which I never look at. But this does not hinder me from loving all the rest. Perhaps I carry my dislike to what I allude to too far. It is possible that it may not be without its use in certain stages of society. But so it is, and I mention it, that I may not be thought to be confounding or recommending two different things.

It is our own fault if we take this 'Rainy-Day Poetry' for more than the author intended it. It is our loss if we do take it for as much. I give it this title, because we may suppose it written to wile away the tedium of rainy days, or of the feelings that resemble it. There is also 'Rainy-Day Prose;' of a great deal of which my own writings are composed, though I was hardly aware of it at the time. I relish all that Swift has favoured us with, of either kind. The only approach that we minor humorists can make to such men is to show that we understand them in all their moods, that nothing is lost on us. The greatest fit of laughter I ever remember to have had was in reading the *Commination* piece against William Wood, in which all his enemies are intro-

duced execrating him in puns. The zest was heightened by the presence of a deaf old lady, who had desired a friend of mine and myself to take a book, while waiting to see a kinsman of hers. Her imperturbable face, the shocking things we said before her, and even the dread of being thought rude, produced a sort of double drama in our minds, extreme and irresistible.

A periodical writer derives the same privileges from necessity which other men do from wit. The rainy days here in Italy are very rare compared with those of England; but the damps which the latter produce within us sometimes make their appearance when we are away; and a . . . In short, it is not necessary to inform the reader that periodical writers produce a great deal of rainy-day poetry, voluntary or involuntary. If he excuses it, all is well. I shall, therefore, whenever I am inclined, make use of this title to pass off rhymes that I have more pleasure in writing than in publishing. The other day I was moved to vent my pluviose indignation on the subject of Ferdinand, King of Spain; a personage who has had the extraordinary fortune (even for a prince) to become the spectacle of the whole world, precisely because he is destitute of every quality which deserves their notice. That my poem might be as small as my subject, I wrote it in lilliputian lines and miniature cantos; but, in consequence of the variety of feelings that pressed upon me as I proceeded, three out of the four became neither one thing nor t'other, and are not worth indulgence. The exordium I lay before the reader, because it contains an anecdote of his Majesty's first appearance on the stage, with which he may not now be acquainted.

I had it from a Spanish gentleman now in England:

'I sing the least of things,—
To wit, the least of kings.

Imprimis, when the nation
First raised him to his station,
And blest him as he rid
In triumph to Madrid,
A gentleman who saw him
(And hugely longed to claw him)
Said, that he never showed
One feeling on the road,
But sat in stupid pride,
Staring on either side,
Letting his hand be kissed
(I think I see the fist),
As if, where'er they took it,
They meant to pick his pocket;
And goggling like an owl,—
The hideous beaky fool!

The last line is emphatic. I had not patience to continue in a proper style of burlesque. Ferdinand has astonished even those who were never astonished at kings before. And yet what was to be expected from this portentous specimen of Royalty—Royalty naked, instinctive, unmitigated, unadorned? What examples he had before him! What an education! What contempt of decencies, public and private! What a mother! what a minister! what a father! The same gentleman who related to me the above anecdote told me that he had seen the old King dining in public, and that the spectacle was disgusting beyond description. Such brutal feeling, such pawing and grinding, such absorption in the immediate appetite and will, and contempt of everything else in the world, could only be exhibited by one who was accustomed to set up the mere consciousness of Royalty as superior to every other consideration. This is Ferdinand's principle. He has no other, nor ever had, even when he petitioned to be made a member of Bonaparte's family. Bonaparte dazzled him like something supernatural, and was an emperor to boot; but if he had not been one

it would have made no difference. The royal will, the immediate security, interest, or even whim, sanctions everything; and Royalty is to come out clear from the furnace upon the strength of its divine right, let it have gone through what it may. How much right have we to complain of it, flattering it as we do, even in the best regulated monarchies? The frog in the fable swelled herself to bursting, as it was; but if she had, besides, had all frogland for spectators and applauders, if she had been puffed up with 'huzzas!' and 'vivas!' and been made a worshipped spectacle wherever she carried herself, who would have wondered at all her children's bursting themselves, one after the other, in spite of her example? I pity, for my part (next to suffering nations), every king in existence, except Ferdinand, and will pity him, too, when he is put out of a condition to slaughter those who would have made him an honest man.

Pleasant C. R! Let me recall my happier rhymes and rainy days by thinking of thee. C. R. is one of those happy persons whom goodness, imagination, and a tranquil art conspire to keep in a perpetual youth. He and his brother once called upon a man whom I knew, who told me he had seen 'the young gentleman;' and yet this man was not old, and C. R. was seven-and-thirty, if he was a day. C. R. has a quaint manner with him, which some take for simplicity. It is; but not of the sort which they take it for. I could hear it talk for an hour together, and have heard it, delighting all the while at the interest he can take in a trifle, and the entertainment he can raise out of it. His simplicity is anything but foolishness, though it is full of *bonhomie*. He is a

nice observer. At the same time he is as romantic as a sequestered schoolmaster, and will make as grave Latin quotations. He produces a history out of a whistle. He will describe to you a steam-engine or a water-mill, with all the machinery and the noise to boot, till you die at once with laughter and real interest at the gravity of his enthusiasm. He makes them appear living things, as the fulling-mills did to Don Quixote. One day he gave us all an account of a man he had seen in the Strand, who was standing with a pole in his hand, at the top of which was a bladder, and underneath the bladder a bill. He told us what a mystery this excited in the minds of the spectators, and how they looked first at 'the man,' then at 'the bill,' and then at 'the bladder;' and again, said he, they looked at the bladder, then at the bill, and so on, ringing the changes on these words till we saw nothing before us in life but a man holding these two phenomena. We begged him to change the word 'man' into 'body,' that charm of alliteration might be added; and he complied with a passing laugh and the greatest good-nature conceivable, entering into the joke, and yet feeling a real gravity in commenting upon the people's astonishment. This combination of 'bill, body, and bladder' was, after all, nothing but a man standing with an advertisement of blacking, or an eating-house, or some such thing. We have been thankful ever since that 'such things are.'

I once rode with C. R. from Gainsborough to Doncaster, making rhymes with him all the way on the word philosopher. We made a hundred and fifty, and were only stopped by arriving at our journey's end. Readers unin-

initiated in doggerel may be startled at this, but nothing is more true. The *words* were all different, and legitimate doggerel rhymes; though, undoubtedly, the *rhymes* themselves must often have been repeated; that is to say, the same consonants must have begun them. The following is a rainy-day pro-

duction on the same subject, exhausting, we believe, the real alphabetical quantum of rhymes with their combinations. But it is submitted with deference to the learned. We dedicate it to our pleasant friend, heartily wishing we could have such another ride with him to-morrow.

' You talk of rhyming to the word philosopher,
That jade the Muse! It's doubtless very cross of her
To stint one even in rhymes, which are the dross of her;
I can't but think that it's extremely gross of her:
I told her once how very wrong it was of her;
If I could help, I'd not ask one, that's poz, of her:
I would not quote *procumbit humis bos* of her;
Nor earn a single lettuce yclept Cos of her;
I would not speak to Valcnaer or to Voss of her;
Nor Dryden's self, although the Great High Joss of her:
I would not care for the *divinum os* of her.
No, though she rhymed me the whole *mos, flos, ros* of her;
Walking in woods I wouldn't brush the moss off her:
Nor in the newest green gown take the gloss off her:
In winter-time I wouldn't keep the snows off her;
And yet I don't think either I could go so far:
Thy anger, certainly, I couldn't show so far:
I didn't think the hatchet I could throw so far.
Good Heavens! now I reflect, I love the nose of her:
I could cut off my hair to tie the hose of her;
The brightest eyes are nothing to the doze of her:
Love in my heart the smallest keepsake stows of her:
O, for as many kisses as I chose of her!
Since I had one there's no sweet air but blows of her:
There's not a stream but murmurs as it flows of her;
I could exalt to heav'n the very clothes of her.
I wonder how a man can speak in prose of her:
Yet some have e'en said ill (while my blood froze) of her:
Never again shall any be that crows offer
To do her harm, or with his *quid pro quos* huff her.
With pleasure I could every earthly woe suffer
Rather than see the charmer's little toe suffer:
Tis only gouty Muses that should so suffer.

ANECDOTE CORNER.

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY E. S. DIXON—J. PALGRAVE SIMPSON—SURGEON-GENERAL COWEN—WILLMOTT DIXON—THE ANECDOTE HUNTER—THE EDITOR—AND OTHERS.

A £20 Dinner for One.

A PARTY of gentlemen happened to be dining at the fashionable restaurant, the Café de Paris, and one of them having asserted that it was impossible for a single person to eat a dinner that should cost 500 francs, and that he would pay for it if he (the eater) could, the Vicomte de Viel-Castel accepted the challenge.

‘But when I say one person,’ he stipulated, ‘I don’t mean a ploughman, but a *gourmet*, an epicure, myself; and when I say *eat*, of course it includes *drink*. Nothing is easier. I will dine, even here, at the Café de Paris, after drawing up my own bill of fare, and I will despatch, without help, your five-hundred franc dinner.’

‘Leaving nothing in the plates and dishes?’

‘Yes; I shall leave the bones.’

‘But you won’t breakfast that day?’

‘I shall breakfast as usual.’

‘Let it come off, then, to-morrow; here, at seven in the evening.’

The *maitre d’hôtel* was summoned and consulted. It was the depth of winter; the Vicomte wanted forced fruits and vegetables: the shooting season was over; he insisted on game. The *maitre d’hôtel* request for a week to prepare in was granted. The umpires were to dine at separate tables, to the right and the left of the Vicomte’s table. He was allow-

ed two hours to dine in, from seven till nine, and he might either talk or hold his tongue.

At the appointed day and hour the parties met and took their places. The bill of fare was still a mystery. The first things served were twelve dozen Ostend oysters and a half-bottle of Johannisberg. The Vicomte’s appetite was sharp; he asked for twelve more dozen oysters and another half-bottle of the same wine. Then came swallows’ nest soup, which the Vicomte poured into a basin and drank off at a draught, like a cup of tea.

‘*Ma foi, messieurs,*’ he said, ‘I feel hungry to-day. Will you allow me to indulge a longing? I adore beefsteak and fried potatoes. That’s an extra which I will pay for myself. Waiter, a bottle of Bordeaux, grand cru.’

The umpires stared at one another. The beefsteak and potatoes were brought and consumed to the very last scrap.

‘And now for the fish! Messieurs, this is a ferrat from the Lake of Geneva, the only place where it is found. It arrived this morning alive, in the water of its native lake. The ferrat is a delicious fish; I advise you to try it. Waiter, another bottle of the same Bordeaux.’

Five minutes afterwards, all that remained of the ferrat was the bones. Then came the truffled pheasant, which was demolished in

I MUST confess there is something in the changeableness and inconstancy of human nature that very often both dejects and terrifies me. Whatever I am at present, I tremble to think what I may be. While I find this principle, how can I assure myself that I shall be always true to my God, my friend, or myself? In short, without constancy, there is neither love, friendship, nor virtue in the world.—ADDISON.

about ten minutes more. Then the *salmis* or ragout of ortolans, ten in number, each of which made just one mouthful. Forced asparagus, green peas from Africa—in those days tinned vegetables were unknown—strawberries, and a pineapple followed, with a half-bottle of Constantia, idem of East India sherry; and then coffee and liqueurs; all of which were consumed to the last scrap and drop. The umpires acknowledged that everything had been executed loyally and literally aboveboard. It

only remained to call for the bill. Total, 548 francs, 50 centimes. A few only of the items need be cited: swallows' nest soup, 150fr.; beefsteak and potatoes, 2fr.; ferrat, from the Lake of Geneva, 40fr.; two bottles of Bordeaux, grand cru, 50fr.; strawberries, 20fr.

The only comment that need be made is, that for the same sum of money a plain but hearty meal might have been given to five hundred hungry men, women, and children.

Raising the Wind but stilling the Waves.

At an English theatre, whose name is unrecorded in history, a storm at sea was the sensational scene in the melodrama of the day. The raging waves were simulated by the gymnastic efforts of men and boys concealed beneath a vast foaming sheet of blue and white canvas, and engaged at the rate of a shilling a night each. As the piece was having a lucrative run, the impecunious manager thought to increase his profits by reducing his troop of wave-makers to sixpence. On learning this one morning, they agreed to strike at night.

Evening came; the house was full, and the interest of the drama had reached its height. The hapless hero and heroine were out at sea, escaping from the wicked tyrant, but exposed to all the horrors of the tempest. The thunder rolled from its ample sheet of iron; the lightnings flashed from their box of resin; the rain and hail rattled from their cask of peas.

From the side-boxes, the doomed ship was visibly waiting to be dashed against the wooden rocks; but the sea continued as calm as a carpet.

'What are you about down there?' growled the manager, peeping under a corner of the aquamarine canvas. 'Why don't you begin?'

'Which is it to be?' asked the leader of the strike, from the depths of Ocean. 'Sixpenny waves or shilling waves?'

'Sixpence, I told you. Not a farthing more.'

'No sixpenny waves, sir, to-night.'

Here the pit and gallery began to grow impatient, and the lightning from the resin-box to show signs of exhaustion.

The manager, driven by the resolution of despair, hoarsely whispered,

'A shilling, then, and be d—d to you all! Go it at once, with all

AT a banquet the ambassador desired the wise men to deliver, every one of them, some sentence or parable, that he might report to his king, which they did ; only one was silent, which the ambassador perceiving, said to him, 'Sir, let it not displease you ; why do you not say something that I may report ?' He answered, 'Report to your lord that there are that can hold their peace.'—LORD BACON.

your might and main—and a pint of porter each if you bring down an encore.'

'I say, Bill,' said the chief demon of the storm, giving his nearest neighbour a nudge, 'let us put

in the whistlings and 'owlings of the 'urricane gratis. Then do you cut up to the gallery and 'alloo encore, while I lie on my back, doing your work with my arms, and my own with my legs.'

A Practical Murderer.

A LATE eminent tragedian, when starring in a country town, was announced to make his final appearance in *Macbeth*. During the rehearsals of the piece he remarked that the actor charged with the part of the First Murderer, instead of standing apart in the banquet scene, persisted in planting himself in the middle of the stage, so as entirely to conceal Macbeth from the audience. This annoyed him greatly, and, not being the best-tempered man in the world, he intimated rather sharply to the offender that his directions were to be implicitly obeyed, and that he should on no account leave the place assigned him. The super—for such he was—promised compliance, but at the last rehearsal completely forgot his instructions, and again took up his position in the centre of the stage. Finding all remonstrance useless, the incensed 'star' sent for the carpenter of the theatre, and bade him fix a brass-headed nail exactly above the

spot where the representative of Banquo's assassin was to stand ; then, turning to the latter, enjoined him, in no very gentle terms, to keep his eye on the nail, and not move an inch from it. The eventful night arrived, and all went well until the important scene in question, when Macbeth, who had seated himself in the midst of his guests, and had just uttered the words,

'Anon we'll drink a measure
The table round,'

beheld, to his horror, the First Murderer stealing across the stage with a perplexed air, and evidently in search of something. Enraged beyond measure at this climax of insubordination, the tragedian so far forgot himself as to mutter in a very audible whisper, 'Confound you ! what are you doing ?' 'Doing !' replied the super indignantly, to the intense amusement of the spectators, 'what should I be doing but looking for that blessed nail ?'

Inharmonious Philharmonics.

WHEN, after eight or ten years' study, Berlioz, the once despised, but now celebrated, French composer, began to comprehend the power of music, he was invited to lead the amateur orchestra of a

recently constituted Philharmonic Society. He was sure their performance would be execrable ; but wishing to gain experience in the art of directing instrumental masses, even by experimenting *in corpore*

THERE are three kinds of silence. Silence from words is good, because inordinate speaking tends to evil. Silence or rest from desires and passions is still better, because it promotes quickness of spirit. But the best of all is silence from unnecessary and wandering thoughts, because that is essential to eternal recollection, and because it lays a foundation for a proper regulation and silence in other respects.—MADAME GUYON.

vile, he accepted the office of *chef d'orchestre*.

On the day of rehearsal he found some sixty performers, who were tuning their instruments with the discordant din peculiar to amateurs. They were about to try a symphony in D, by Gyrowetz—of all rubbishy things the most rubbishy. They began; the clarionets sent forth a frightful dissonance. Berlioz, stopping the orchestra, said to the culprits, 'You have probably mistaken one piece for another, messieurs. We are playing in the key of D, and you are playing in F.' 'No, monsieur, there is no mistake in the piece; it is Gyrowetz's symphony.' 'Let us begin again, then.' Fresh discord; another stoppage. 'There is something wrong. Show

me your part. Parbleu! the cacophony is easily explained. Your part, certainly, is written in F, but for clarionets in A, and your F, in that case, becomes the unison of our D. You have taken the wrong instruments.' 'Monsieur, we have only clarionets in C.' 'Well, then, transpose your parts into the right key.' 'We can't transpose; we don't know how.' 'In that case, *ma foi*, hold your tongues; keep silence, and shut up your instruments.' 'I daresay, indeed, we shall do that! We are members of the society, and we have just as much right to play as the others.'

At this incredible speech Berlioz dropped his conductor's bâton, and ran away as if the deuce were at his heels.

Strange and True.

THE famous geologist and author, Hugh Miller, in his autobiographical work, *My Schools and Schoolmasters*, tells therein a very strange story, in which he appears to have had a firm belief. He says he was sitting beside the fire, with his mother one evening after a day of bleak sullen weather, while a heavy sea was rolling in upon the coast beside which they lived. A short and cheerful letter, written in a very hopeful spirit, had been received from his father, the master of a small sloop then coming home from Peterhead. Suddenly the door was opened, and little Hugh Miller, a child of five years old, was told to close it. On doing so,

he says, 'I saw at the open door, within less than a yard of my breast, as plainly as ever I saw anything, a dissevered hand and arm, apparently those of a female, stretched towards me. They bore a livid and sodden appearance; and directly fronting me, where the body ought to have been, there was only a blank transparent space, through which I could see the dim forms of the objects beyond. I was fearfully startled, and ran shrieking to my mother, telling what I had seen; and the house-girl, whom she next sent to shut the door, apparently affected by my terror, also returned frightened, and said she too had seen the woman's

IT is a good plan with a young person of a character to be much affected by ludicrous and absurd representations to show him plainly, by example, that there is nothing which may not be so represented; he will hardly need to be told that everything is not a mere joke; and he may thus be secured from falling into a contempt of those particular things which he may at any time happen to find so treated.—ARCHBISHOP WHATELY (*Annotations of Bacon's Essay 'Of Atheism'*).

hand; which, however, did not seem to have been the case. And finally, my mother going to the door saw nothing, though she appeared much impressed by the extremeness of my terror and the minuteness of my description.' The strange vision associated itself with an event which was always a painful memory in the mind of

Hugh Miller—the death of his father, who was never seen afterwards. 'I used,' he says, 'to climb, day after day, a grassy protuberance of the old coast-line to look wistfully out for the sloop, with the two stripes of white and the two square topsails; but the white stripes and the square topsails I never saw.'

A Lover of Solitude.

ANGUS ROY FLETCHER was the name of a Scotchman who isolated himself from his kind in the last century, by building himself a cottage in the wildest and most inaccessible part of Glenorchary, on the side of a mountain, and in the midst of a thick wood. There he lived alone, fishing, hunting, and cultivating his ground, keeping a few goats for milk and some dogs for companions, shunning men and women and disliking their society, and yet, strange to add, as careful of his person and as

foppish in his dress as if he moved in the midst of admiring observers, and as genial and hospitable, charitable and humane, to rich or poor whom chance brought to his secluded domain, as if instead of his misanthropical habits he had the most sociable of instincts. These chance visitors, however, never caught him at home. To avoid them he lived in the open air, and only went home after dark, or when the weather was too severe to be endured unsheltered.

The Prince and the President.

IN 1861, Prince Napoleon (Jerome), then in the full tide of prosperity, spent a couple of months in America. The day after his arrival at Washington, he betook himself to the White House, to pay a visit to the President, Abraham Lincoln. White House, the President's official residence, is a place of imposing aspect, surrounded by a handsome garden. When the Prince got out of his carriage, together with the French

Minister, Baron Mercier, at the foot of a magnificent flight of marble steps, they found nobody, neither domestic nor usher, to introduce them or even to open the door. Some chance messenger, who happened to be passing that way, undertook the double office.

Without presuming to blame the simplicity of republican manners, it may be remarked that it is hardly logical to dwell in a palace and not to have a doorkeeper. A

ALL pleasure must be *bought* at the price of pain ; the difference between false pleasure and true is just this : for the *true*, the price is paid *before* you enjoy it ; for the *false*, *after* you enjoy it.—JOHN FOSTER.

palace whose occupants are their own hall-porters is ridiculous anywhere, even in America. It is the pride which apes humility.

The drawing-room into which the Prince and his suite found their way is a splendid apartment, covered with gilding, richly furnished, but in questionable taste. After waiting a quarter of an hour, the Prince's increasing impatience began to threaten a sudden retreat, when there entered a little man in a straw hat, a gray frock-coat, and no cravat, or one so small as not to be worth mentioning. He advanced with a rapid step and cheerful manner to Baron Mercier, who, giving him a friendly shake of the hand, presented him to the Prince as Mr. Seward, United States Minister for Foreign Affairs. It will be remembered that, at that time, Mr. Seward was one of the most influential persons in the Republic.

A few minutes after Mr. Seward's entry, Mr. Lincoln made his appearance. His stature was so much above the average that he might fairly be called a giant, if the term did not belong to a showman's vocabulary. His countenance bore no marked character, but resembled the Celtic type of Auvergne—with long head, sharp nose, very black hair, and beard trimmed to a point in American fashion. While his physiognomy expressed benevolence and frankness, his attitude and manners were those of a modest and retiring, even of a timid, person. Perhaps his apparent embarrassment was only the result of the difficulty, experienced by immoderately tall persons, of concealing their height and main-

taining their body in passable equilibrium. They have more need than other people of lessons in deportment.

The interview was far from gay. The President, after shaking hands with the Prince, shook hands with all his suite. For a moment the reception seemed likely to stop short at this mute demonstration. Mr. Lincoln occupied a few minutes by begging the Prince to be seated, and by sitting down himself, with great shifting and shovings of armchairs hither and thither. But once those new positions taken, the two principal parties sat opposite to each other without either of them attempting to open the conversation. Mr. Lincoln was visibly ill at ease ; the Prince, offended at having been kept waiting, took a cruel pleasure in refraining from helping his host out of the difficulty, and remained silent and impassive. At last, the President ventured to speak of Prince Lucien, Prince Napoleon's father. Mr. Lincoln had started on the wrong tack, and received a hint to that effect, which only increased the awkwardness of the situation. They then exchanged a few remarks about the weather and the Atlantic passage, the Prince still maintaining the air of cold politeness which is customary with him when he is in company with any one to whom he does not care to make advances. Finally, Mr. Lincoln had recourse to the hand-shaking ceremony. As there were seven on one side and two on the other, it just filled up the time usually assigned to this sort of interview. Every one retired, delighted to have finished these

A PLEASURE that a man may call as properly his own as his soul and his conscience, neither liable to accident nor exposed to injury; it is the foretaste of heaven, and the earnest of eternity.—SOUTH.

official presentations, whose wearisomeness was only compensated by the hope of pleasanter intercourse afterwards.

In the evening they dined with the President, and got on a little

better together, Mr. Seward remaining the favourite. But on this occasion which of the two was the less well-bred, the Prince or the President?

Another Berlioz Anecdote.

A WEALTHY country gentleman went to Berlioz, accompanied by his son, a young man of two-and-twenty, who, by his own confession, could not read a note of music.

'I am come to beg you, monsieur,' he said, 'to have the goodness to give lessons in high composition (*haute composition*) to this young man, who, I expect, will do you credit. His first idea was to be a colonel; but, in spite of the attractions of military glory, he decidedly prefers artistic fame. He thinks it better to be a great composer.'

'O monsieur,' Berlioz exclaimed, 'you are making a sad mistake. If you only knew the mortifica-

tions and disappointments inseparable from that career! Great composers tear each other to pieces. And, besides, there are so many of them. In my opinion, your son had much better stick to his first idea, and enter the regiment you just now mentioned.'

'What regiment?'

'Parbleu! the regiment of colonels.'

'Monsieur, your pleasantry is quite uncalled for. I will not trouble you any longer. Happily, you are not the only music-master, and consequently, even without your help, my son can still be a great composer. We have the honour to salute you.'

A Canine Critic on Music.

IN the year 1839, a phenomenon appeared in the musical world which attracted considerable attention in Germany. A gentleman who was well known as an enthusiastic musical amateur of Darmstadt, in the Grand Duchy of Hesse, had a female spaniel, called Poodle. By striking the animal whenever music was played, and a false note struck, she was made to howl. At last the threat of the upraised stick was equally effective, presently a mere glance of the master's eye produced the same howl, and at last the false note itself. A German paper of the period says, 'At the present time

there is not a concert or an opera at Darmstadt to which Mr. Frederick S. and his wonderful dog are not invited, or, at least, the dog. The voice of the prima donna, the instruments of the band, whether violin, clarinet, hautbois, or bugle—all of them must execute their parts in perfect harmony, otherwise Poodle looks at its master, erects its ears, shows its grinders, and howls outright. Old or new pieces, known or unknown to the dog, produce the same effect.' It must not be supposed that the discrimination of the creature was confined to the mere execution of musical compositions. Whatever may have

THE abilities of man must fall short on one side or other, like too scanty a blanket when you are a-bed. If you pull it upon your shoulders you leave your feet bare ; if you thrust it down upon your feet your shoulders are uncovered.—SIR W. TEMPLE.

been the case at the outset of its musical career, towards its close a vicious modulation or a false relation of parts produced the same result. Sometimes to tease the dog, says our German authority, 'Mr. S. and his friends take a pleasure in annoying the canine critic, by emitting all sorts of discordant sounds from instrument and voice. On such occasions the

creature loses all self-command, its eyes shoot forth fiery flashes, and long and frightful howls respond to the inharmonious concert of the mischievous bipeds. But the latter must be careful not to go too far, because when the dog's patience is much tried it becomes savage, and endeavours to bite both its persecutors and their instruments.'

The Key of E not a Dancing Key.

A DANCER who, in Italy, had mounted up to the clouds, came to make his *début* in Paris, and requested the introduction, in the ballet in which he was to appear, of a *pas* which had brought him avalanches of flowers at Milan and Naples. His wish was obeyed. The general rehearsal came. But this piece of dance-music, for one reason or another, had been copied a tone higher than in the original score.

They began ; the dancer started

for the skies, hovered a moment, and then, suspending his flight and descending to earth, inquired, 'In what key are you playing, messieurs ? My piece (*mon morceau*) seems to fatigue me more than usual.'

'We are playing in the key of E.'

'I understand the reason now. Have the goodness to transpose the allegro a tone lower. I can only dance it in the key of D.'

American Nicknames.

THE following are the nicknames by which the States in the American Union are designated in the familiar political vocabulary of America : Alabama, lizards ; Arkansas, toothpicks ; California, gold hunters ; Colorado, rovers ; Connecticut, wooden nutmegs ; Delaware, blue hen's chickens ; Florida, fly-up-the-creeks ; Georgia, crackers ; Illinois, suckers ; Indiana, hoosiers ; Iowa, hawk-eyes ; Kansas, jayhawkers ; Kentucky, corn-crakers ; Louisiana, creoles ; Maine, foxes ; Maryland, craw-humpers ; Michigan, wolverines ;

Minnesota, gophers ; Mississippi, tadpoles ; Missouri, pukers ; Nebraska, bug-eaters ; Nevada, stage hens ; New Hampshire, granite boys ; New Jersey, blues, or clam-catchers ; New York, knickerbockers ; North Carolina, tarboilers and tuckoes ; Ohio, buckeyes ; Oregon, web-feet and hard cases ; Pennsylvania, leatherheads and Pennanites ; Rhode Island, gun-flints ; South Carolina, weasels ; Tennessee, whelps ; Texas, beef-heads ; Vermont, Green Mountain boys ; Virginia, beadles ; and Wisconsin, badgers.

CONSCIENCE is a Latin word, and according to the very notation of it imports a double or joint knowledge—one of a divine law and the other of a man's own action ; and so is the application of a general law to a particular instance of practice.—SOUTH.

A Wonderful Escape.

In an old work called *Taylor's Mystery of Ghosts* occurs the following story of a miraculous escape from drowning. A tall heavy woman, named Williams, had been to spend an evening with some friends who resided on the eastern side of the river Usk, near Caerlon in Wales, her own house being on the opposite side. Going and returning she had to cross a wooden bridge, curiously constructed in consequence of the river's occasional rising, which it did sometimes to the almost incredible height of fifty or sixty feet. The boards which composed the flooring of this bridge were designedly loose, and supported by pegs, in order that on such occasions they might not be destroyed, but float with the tide. Returning home with a lantern and lighted candle, the night being very dark, Mrs. Williams was passing over this bridge when she trod upon a board which, by some accident, had lost the tenons originally fixed to its ends. Plank and woman slipped and fell into the river ! Strangely enough, on reaching the water Mrs. Williams found herself astride the plank and supported by it. With great pre-

sence of mind, after the first outburst of alarm, she steadied herself upon her strange steed, and was glad to regain her lantern with the candle still burning, rightly concluding that any one seeing the floating light would be curious to know its meaning. The tide bore her rapidly towards Newport, where she hoped her cries would be heard by those who would assist her, or that the bridge would stay her progress. To her great horror, she was disappointed. The hour was late and the good people of the town were buried in slumber, and the swiftness of the spring-tide sent her straight through the arch with the velocity of an arrow shot from a bow. So she sped on, her candle burning lower and lower, her hands and limbs so benumbed with cold that she every moment expected her hold to relax. In this desperate position she reached the mouth of the Usk, and was on the eve of encountering the turbulent waves of the Bristol Channel, when the master of a fishing-boat returning from his nightly toils saw her gleaming candle, and, hearing her cries, succeeded in rescuing her.

A Hoarseness caught Ages and Ages ago.

AUBER, the composer of *Fra Diavolo*, *La Muette de Portici*, &c., was present at a musical party, where an amateur tenor, with a weak and husky voice, sang the romance from *Joseph*. When the singer came to the words,

'Dans un humide et froid abîme
Ils me plongent, dans leur fureur'

(Damp and chilly was the pit
Wherein they cast me, there to die),

Auber whispered to his neighbour, 'Poor Joseph was left too long in the pit. He caught a cold there, and a bad sore throat.'

JANE WELSH CARLYLE.*

(*With a Portrait.*)

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

WHATEVER differences of opinion may exist as to the publication of these Letters, the volumes which contain them will remain a standard addition to the Literature of an almost lost Art—that of Letter-writing.

For touching interest, this record of the struggles of a brave spirit can scarcely be matched amongst modern books.

The mingled pathos and humour of the 'Letters' will give the reader of to-day a 'glimmering' of Mrs. Carlyle's mental power. This, as well as the bright, nervous style, makes one feel that the Writer was not wrong when playfully suggesting that she, also, was 'a genius.'

For many years I have kept silence amidst the buzz of books bearing on CARLYLE and DE QUINCEY; their comrades of 'THE LAKE SCHOOL' and other brethren of the pen. Some day, perhaps, I may yet be able to carry out a long-cherished design and supplement my Father's 'Reminiscences' (given in Page's 'Life of De Quincey'). I may endeavour to give some faint idea of the wondrous charm of his conversation; its varied, discursive scholarship; the enormous wealth of illustration which his retentive memory had always at command; and his personal recollections of brilliant men throughout two generations. If I be able to do so, it would give me an opportunity of correcting various misconceptions which have found their way into print during the last quarter of a century.

Whilst editing the later Volumes of 'The Instructor' and afterwards 'Titan' (to both of which Mr. De Quincey contributed) I was at the same time, for a number of years, in con-

* *Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle.* Prepared for publication by Thomas Carlyle. Edited by James Anthony Froude. 3 vols. 8vo. (Longmans, Green, & Co. 1883.)

stant personal communication with him concerning his writings as they passed through the Press.

As 'art is long and life is short'—my work leaving me but little leisure, I feel that I ought, on the publication of these Memorials of Mrs. Carlyle, to make known an opinion concerning her, of which I am now the sole depositary. It is a tribute to the worth of a noble Wife by one well able to estimate her intellectual calibre and gracious, womanly character.

In the old 'London Magazine' days De Quincey had a very serious illness, of which he always talked to me as one of the most critical in his existence.

I cannot, at present, remember whether he was in a lodging at the time, although I rather think so. At all events it was in London, and Mrs. Carlyle came to his rescue—nursing him through the severe attack with the tenderest care.

De Quincey's gratitude to her was life-long. Nor was it gratitude merely. He had the most profound admiration for the intellectual power which lay 'prisoned' by Mrs. Carlyle's self-sacrifice and devotion to her husband's interests—a fact which the public is now beginning to understand.

Many, many a time, while conversing with me, he recurred to this subject with affectionate earnestness.

In our long talks at Lasswade and Lothian Street (sometimes lasting four or five hours at a stretch); or in our midnight walks from Mavis-Bush Cottage, along some miles of quiet country road to the toll-bar at Newington, this matter cropped up.

One moment it would be the Kantian Philosophy—with a droll reference to Kant's amazing garters, which that master wound and unwound whilst expounding himself to his disciples; then some recollection of the Taylor and Hessey period—'The Confessions,' Coleridge, Lamb, and the Carlyles.

I well recollect the impassioned tone in which he said to me one evening, speaking of Mrs. Carlyle:—

'She—is one—of the most angelic creatures—whom I have ever—met—on this God's earth!'*

[I use the dash as the means of expressing the slow measured, emphatic manner in which the words were spoken.]

In May 1876 I spent about an hour with Mr. Carlyle at

* De Quincey died in 1859; Mrs. Carlyle in 1866.

Cheyne Row. On that occasion I, at last, delivered to him some moving remembrances which I had received, with discretionary power, from De Quincey. I dare not say more than this :—My words, which had become, by that time, a message from the grave, made Carlyle quiver with emotion, and it was some time before he regained his self-command.

JAMES HOGG.

. I append the Epitaph which appears in Vol. III. of the 'Letters and Memorials':—

Mrs. Carlyle was buried by the side of her father, in the choir of Haddington Church. These words follow on the tombstone after her father's name :—

HERE LIKEWISE NOW RESTS

JANE WELSH CARLYLE,

SPOUSE OF THOMAS CARLYLE, CHELSEA, LONDON.

SHE WAS BORN AT HADDINGTON, 14TH JULY, 1801, ONLY DAUGHTER OF THE ABOVE JOHN WELSH, AND OF GRACE WELSH, CAPLEGILL, DUMFRIESSHIRE, HIS WIFE. IN HER BRIGHT EXISTENCE SHE HAD MORE SORROWS THAN ARE COMMON ; BUT ALSO A SOFT INVINCIBILITY, A CLEARNESS OF DISCERNMENT, AND A NOBLE LOYALTY OF HEART, WHICH ARE RARE. FOR FORTY YEARS SHE WAS THE TRUE AND EVER-LOVING HELPMATE OF HER HUSBAND, AND BY ACT AND WORD UNWEARIEDLY FORWARDED HIM, AS NONE ELSE COULD, IN ALL OF WORTHY, THAT HE DID OR ATTEMPTED. SHE DIED AT LONDON, 21ST APRIL, 1866 ; SUDDENLY SNATCHED AWAY FROM HIM, AND THE LIGHT OF HIS LIFE, AS IF GONE OUT.



GIORGIONE.

See 'Stories of Pictures in the National Gallery.'

LONDON SOCIETY.

JUNE 1883.

TALES OUT OF SCHOOL.

BY AN EX-OFFICIAL.

CHAPTER III.

HIGH LIGHTS AND ERRATIC SPIRITS.

NOT to speak of the numerous men distinguished within their own particular sphere of departmental duty, whose value is well known to political leaders, but of whom only a few are heard of by the outside public, the Civil Service can claim many men who have risen to eminence in literature and other walks of life. The names readily occur to one's mind of Charles Lamb and Smiles, Trollope and Tom Taylor, George Rose (Arthur Sketchley), who began life in the Custom House, W. M. Rossetti, the art-critic and poet, as well as many others. Henry Ancell may be honourably mentioned, and certainly also Edward Arber, now Professor of the English Language and Literature at the Mason Science College, Birmingham, whose 'reprints' are so widely known and appreciated.

The two last-named gentlemen were fellow-workers with me in the same department.

Mr. Arber was a man who was imperfectly understood among his *confrères* in the Service, and by consequence his talents were undervalued. His idiosyncrasies frequently brought down upon him the good-humoured irony of

his companions; but, with a strength of confidence in himself, he steadily pursued his own way, smiling at the quips and chaff that were showered upon him. Using every spare hour with ceaseless industry, in training for a future as yet all unknown, and perhaps undreamed of, he attended evening lectures at King's College; took his degree of A.K.C.; and prepared for the press his well-known and highly-valued reprints, till his name was honoured in the literary world.

Then, in 1878, came a partial break up of the Civil establishment, in which he had spent more than twenty years of his life; and he began a new career. I use his own words:

'As for myself, since I came out in the exodus, I have gone through a perfect baptism of work of every possible kind.

'In three years I went from the bottom to the top of my new profession, a thing never before heard of.

'I got this appointment out of twenty-eight candidates, without the least favour, simply as the best man; for I knew no one in Birmingham.'

This is a striking example of self-help.

'I have sold,' he says (1883), '135,000 books from sixpence to

fifty guineas each, without advertising. I have been printing since January 1868, and continue to do so, but somewhat more slowly now, having 500 lectures every session of nine months to give in the College.'

Mr. Ancell was one of the originators of the great coöperative movement promoted by Civil Servants, and called after their name.

He was a member of the managing committee of the first of those institutions—the Post Office Supply Association—which was born in a cupboard, and grew to be a giant of such dread power and portent, that those of the trading-classes who began to find their profits menaced by it were leagued together to compass its destruction.

The whole of the great coöperative societies in London had their origin in the purchase of a chest of tea by a few clerks in the Post Office, whose small salaries made it necessary for them to cast about and see where it was possible to save a shilling. The movement would probably have been confined to the Civil Service for many years at least, if it had not been for the short-sighted policy of tradesmen, who, by their opposition, made it necessary for the Civil Servants to strengthen their position.

Mr. Ancell parted company from the original society, in consequence of some difference in council, and founded a second establishment at the West-end, which rapidly grew in importance, and is now well known as the 'Haymarket Stores.' He was a man of unusual energy, and great talent for organisation; and it was his pride to do his work thoroughly as an official, so that none could say that he neglected his duty to the public service, while he under-

took the chief direction of the economic institution in the Haymarket. He was widely known and respected, and many friends deplored his comparatively early death.

The coöperative movement in the metropolis took its rise in the necessities of Civil Servants, and the increased cost of living caused, in some measure at least, by the high profits charged by tradesmen on their wares.

Any measures that Government might now be induced to take to prevent public officers from occupying their spare time in directing or organising these societies would be powerless to repress them, or to stem the tide of a movement which has acquired a momentum and strength of its own, quite independent of the class who initiated it.

Coöperation has been a boon to many thousands of people, in providing good and unadulterated articles at reasonable prices, and in checking the credit system, which is often a bane to persons of limited income. But the honest tradesman, who will sell genuine goods at moderate profits, has little to fear from the competition of the Stores. The former will probably always command a cheaper market to buy in, while his experience and personal supervision will enable him to keep establishment expenses down to a lower rate; and the many conveniences of dealing at an ordinary shop will always secure him a fair share of custom.

To return to the *personnel* of my department.

Of course there will always be tares among the wheat, together with bright poppies and other weeds—all beautiful to the worshipper of Nature and the votary of art, though unlovely to the eye of the utilitarian. So there are

plums and spice in a pudding, held together by the gluten and albumen which form the nutritional basis of the composition. There were idle men amongst us, fast men, and young men who had not yet thrown off the traditions and playfulness of boyhood.

Among the idle I am afraid I must enumerate one Scroop; but he had not always been a member of that class. He had worked his way up by application and natural ability until he became a 'first-class clerk,' and having attained that eminence, he thought proper to make his juniors do all the work, while he enjoyed his *otium cum dignitate*. A habit had grown upon him of going about from room to room wasting his own time and that of busier people; and there were a few other men who, seeing no further promotion before them, began to exhibit symptoms of the same complaint, though less conspicuously.

But the idle man is a marked man in every walk of life, although he may not think it, and a day of reckoning was coming.

Of the fast men, there was once a little knot with more money than brains, who might be found on occasions tossing for a quarter's salary—a sum commonly defined as a 'screw,' and considered only sufficient to find a man in cigars. Some, of course, went in for extravagance, for which they could never pay except by heavy drafts on parental resources. A few kept horses, and found too late that these are animals which eat at night.

Tradition speaks of orgies indulged in by individuals among these ornaments of their generation, which are too gross for description in these pages. But there came a day when a scandal in the Haymarket in the small

hours of morning brought their misdeeds before the powers that be, too prominently to be passed over. The worst of the delinquents were summarily dismissed, and the dismay that succeeded sobered the rest into more estimable courses. But all this, I am bound to say, was many years ago.

Many of the wildest and most reckless young fellows within my cognisance, both in and out of Government offices, have been sons of clergymen—those whose early training (as many people would think) should make them the steadiest of men. The cause is not far to seek: it is the natural law of reaction. The tension has been too strong, the training too severe.

The boys of the place and period had their exuberant times. On an occasion when some of them were working hard on the Estimates for Parliament, a student in a collegiate establishment across the road took it into his head to relieve the monotony of study by flashing a looking-glass into their eyes until they were too dazzled to go on working. It was doubly provoking at such a busy time; but the student laughed at the remonstrances shouted at him, and was soon joined by other genial spirits in the new-found sport. This was too much for the youth of the Civil Service, and coals began to fly across at the men with the looking-glasses; the shots were returned, and a furious battle raged for some minutes, till many panes of glass had been broken, and the combatants on both sides began to think of the consequences. The collegians, having peradventure studied logic, felt the weakness of their position in having provoked the war, and they caved in. Much commotion was observable in the enemy's camp, and by and by

solemn emissaries came over from the Dons. The head of our room, however, who had been absent during the escapade, but was so well acquainted with our characters that he did not call upon us to plead, assured the deputation that the gentlemen in his branch would be incapable of the conduct attributed to them; and, although the provocation seemed almost to justify retaliation, he thought the coals must have been projected from some other windows. The students, I fear, were not so lucky in getting their conduct explained away.

Old Pebble, as we used to call him, and Pevensey Moreton, were very great chums, and both were young men overflowing with innocent devilry. Old Pebble had been a middy in the navy, and was still a great pet with all his messmates; but having been wrecked on a sandy island somewhere near the Persian Gulf, where he had nothing to eat but raw pork and ship's biscuit, and many hardships to endure, he contracted rheumatic fever, and was invalided out of the service. In his comparatively short naval experience, however, he had been through some hard fighting in China, and seen rough work in the Baltic during the Russian War. He had distinguished himself for daring and bravery on many trying occasions.

In boarding a Chinese war-junk one day with a boat's crew, he was the first to jump on the deck; and was met by a ferocious Tartar armed with two swords, in the use of which the Tartar is murderously skilful. Pebble would have been cut down in another moment, as 'sure as eggs is eggs,' but with a pistol in his left, he dropped the Tartar dead on the deck, and hurried forward.

'That was a good shot, sir,'

said the bo's'n, who was close behind him; and the blue-jackets followed their officer as they would have followed him anywhere, like a hailstorm. The rest of the junk's crew, after a short resistance, jumped pell-mell over the side, panic-stricken by the determined attack of the English sailors. Pebble kept the two swords of this particular Tartar as a trophy of the fight.

At another time, when the Taku forts were attacked, he was commanding a boat and rowing rapidly, under fire from the forts, to take the enemy in flank, when a round shot, too well directed, swept clean through the bank of men on the port side, and Pebble was obliged to return, by order from the ship. Half his men were mangled corpses, while in his place at the helm he had escaped only by a hair's breadth.

Old Pebble and Moreton were one day invited to dine with some naval officers at Woolwich; and, as they wished to spend a long afternoon there, and look up a few special friends before dinner, they got permission to leave duty at an early hour.

Being young and somewhat inexperienced they were not deterred by prudential considerations from participating in certain ante-prandial libations that good-fellowship seemed to demand with the various friends they met; and the natural result was that when grog and cigars had followed a good dinner, Moreton began to feel that a little fresh air would be good for his health. He therefore excused himself to his kind host, saying he would be back in a few minutes, and went out for a walk.

As bad luck would have it, he happened to call at a refreshment-bar in the course of his walk, and after leaving this place his recollection entirely failed him. Since,

however, the truth must be told, so far as it can now be gathered, the fact seems to have been that he was found derelict by a member of the police force, and was locked up carefully in a cell, where he slept soundly till morning.

On awaking, and finding himself in a very dark place, he rubbed his eyes and wondered greatly where he could have got to. Then he perceived a very small window, very high up, with iron bars across it, admitting only a ghostly glimmer that seemed to make the darkness visible.

He arose and began a vigorous kicking at the door, till anon a grating therein opened, and the head of a red-haired 'bobby' presented itself.

'Hullo,' said the head, 'what's the matter now?'

'Where am I?' said Moreton.

'You're at Woolwich. You was brought in 'ere last night, drunk and incapable. Have you got any friends to bail you out?'

'You be hanged!' said Moreton.

'What's your name?'

'It's no matter to you what my name is.'

'O, very well; I suppose you'll have to give a name when you come before the magistrate.'

And the red-haired minion of an outraged law departed, with a mocking grin.

Moreton was left alone again to commune with his own soul; and as the gravity of the situation dawned upon his mind he began to take an inventory of himself. He found his features slightly damaged; money and scarf-pin gone, as well as necktie and collar; but his cards and letters with his name and address were still in his pockets. These he conveyed at once into his boots, that his identity might not be discovered, and then knocked again, and saw the in-

spector. This officer spoke kindly to the erring one, and advised him to write to some friend to bail him out, as the court would not open till three o'clock in the afternoon. So he wrote to his host of the night before, explaining his delicate position, and signed himself, 'Yours truly, Waverley Brown.'

The host was an officer of experience, who probably understood these things, and being unable to leave his duties, promptly despatched his trusty steward to do what was needful.

The inspector, meanwhile, finding Moreton was a gentleman, brought him out of the cell, returned him his scarf-pin and collar, and made him as comfortable as circumstances would permit. The money, Moreton believes, was appropriated by the red-haired one, who was afterwards, he heard, convicted of larceny in a case of much more serious proportions.

The steward duly arrived, and whispered, 'Stick to your name, sir—Waverley Brown;' and our friend was, for a time, again at liberty.

Later in the day he was brought up to answer the charge made against him.

He of the red hair declared, 'Please, your worship, I found the prisoner drunk and incapable. He was very violent, your worship; and it took five of us to bring him to the station.'

'If he was incapable,' said the magistrate, 'why did it require so many to manage him, and how could he be violent?'

Rufus was silent.

'What have you to say to this charge, prisoner?'

The prisoner regretted very much that, dining out last night, he had inadvertently exceeded the bounds of prudence. He was both ashamed and exceedingly sorry to find himself in his present

position, but he had no recollection of what had occurred, &c.

'Five shillings,' said the magistrate. 'Next case.'

The prisoner breathed again. He had bribed his accuser to say nothing of a further assertion made by him privately, doubtless with a view to extort money, to the effect that Moreton had 'shinned him awful,' a statement for which there was no foundation, and of which his shins bore not the slightest evidence.

When the next issue of the *Woolwich Mercury* came out it was duly chronicled therein that a young man of gentlemanly appearance, giving the name of Waverley Brown, had been fined for being drunk, &c.

On the morning after the dinner old Pebble reappeared at duty as usual, but, of course, there was no Moreton. Pebble was at a loss to account for his friend, who, he said, had left by an earlier train from Woolwich, while he himself had returned by the latest.

Meantime, Moreton had written to explain his absence. He had been running to catch this same last train, and had, unfortunately, fallen on the steps of the station, and cut his face rather severely.

The discrepancy in the evidence was never elucidated. Moreton had to lie up in ordinary for a few days, and nothing more was said. But, long afterwards, 'Waverley Brown' was a name to conjure with by those who knew the secrets of the story.

Moreton is now a steady-going member of a West-end club; and as he sits there reading his *Field*, you would never suppose that it was he who, left alone with Mr. Briar one Saturday afternoon to represent the eternal continuity of office duty, took to playing ball with empty ink-bottles, and, finding the sport too slow, recom-

mended the adoption of full bottles as being 'more exciting.' He it was, however; and, having more force of character than Briar, he overcame the timid counsels of his *particeps criminis*. They chose each a quart stone bottle of Morrell's ink, one red and one black, and threw them backwards and forwards to each other across the room. All went merrily for a time, till, in an unlucky moment, the bottles collided in mid-air and smashed to pieces. Great was the ruin of property that ensued. The parti-coloured inks made a vast stain on the matted floor, as of a map of the eastern hemisphere, and bespattered the desks and papers all round, to say nothing of the shirt-sleeves of the dismayed operators. Excitement was now at its height. They threw down jugs of water from the lavatory to wash out the stain; the water went through the ceiling to the office below, and messengers were sent up to know what was the matter.

On Monday morning Nemesis appeared—first in the person of the head of the room, who, naturally incensed by the conduct of his juniors, made a great fuss, and reported the delinquents to the chief officer.

Moreton and Briar were severely reprimanded, Moreton the more as being the elder, but most of all for an act of thoughtlessness in appearing before his august chief with a glass in his eye. The glass was worn innocently enough as an aid to vision, but was interpreted by his chief as a signal of defiance.

Such were the vagaries of some of the youthful scions of officialdom, who afterwards became ornaments of their profession.

The sober character of Mr. Steeple, whose untiring industry

made him at once a rebuke to these wilder spirits and a butt for their good-humoured chaff, stood out in strong contrast.

It fell to his lot, however, to have to break into harness one or two such thoroughbred colts as we have been considering, much to the disquietude of the usually even tenor of his way.

'Steeple,' Walford would say, 'can't do any work—haven't got a pen.'

'Come,' would be Steeple's reply, 'that statement must be got out for the Board to-day. Sit down.'

'No use, Steeple; haven't got any ink.'

'Nonsense; there's ink, and there's a pen. Now get to work, there's a good fellow, and don't be a donkey.'

'Steeple, you look quite fierce to-day. How your whiskers are growing!'

Steeple had a remarkably smooth face; but he took all the chaff with a quiet smile, and often gave back a telling hit in return.

Walford was a clever fellow, and always did his work well in the end. He retired from the Civil Service while still young, and joined the army, in which he became an officer of some repute.

One of the most singular persons that ever entered Government employ was, perhaps, Mr. Adolphus Bold. He stated that he came from Worcester; but, if what Alcibiades said of the Cretans was true, he might have come from Crete.

His star was not long in the ascendant, and it set very rapidly. He used to tell the most unnecessary stories of himself and his doings, which had no foundation in fact. He was, indeed, a born romancer, though a clumsy one, and you could not believe him on his oath, even though he might

take it, as Moreton would say, 'on a gross o' Bibles.'

Having boasted of his possession of a camera, and of his skill in the art of photography, he was induced, after much persuasion, to promise that he would send for the instrument and take a group of his fellows. Of course the camera never came; so, after waiting a few days, and being assured by him that he really had sent for it, his companions secretly prepared a square parcel to resemble it, packed with blacking-brushes, towels, and sundries. This they intrusted to Blade, the messenger, with instructions to demand sixpence for delivery.

Blade presently entered and touched his forehead. 'Parcel for you, sir; sixpence to pay.'

Bold eyed it askance, while the others all cried out, 'O, here's the camera!'

'No,' said Bold, 'I know what it is. It is not the camera;' and he paid the sixpence, but would not open the parcel.

By and by he espied a corner of the paper torn, and, choosing a moment when he thought he was not seen, tore it a little farther, and then the cat was out of the bag, and poor Bold looked rather silly. He was not abashed, however. And when at last, after due trial, he was discharged from the Service for incompetency, his *confrères* composed a farewell ode, reciting his most salient stories. The ode was written to the tune of 'Villikins and his Dinah,' and on the day of his departure he was requested to stand up while old Pebble sang verse by verse in his merry voice, and the laughing company rolled out the chorus—'Singing to-ral, li to-ral, li to-ral, li-day.'—Where the head of the room was I don't know.

Bold departed, unable to offer any adequate response to this

singular valediction. But not many months after he turned up again in a red shirt and blue continuations. He had enlisted in Garibaldi's irregular army, and, having served through a campaign in Italy, had been promoted to the rank of sergeant. But, true to his old character, he gave out that he was an aide-de-camp on the General's staff, a statement for which we found there was no foundation.

There he stood with his back to the fireplace, in all the glory of red and blue—his hair cropped close as scissors could shear it, and his sugar-loaf head framed, by an optical illusion, in the Stationers' almanac, which hung over the mantelpiece behind him—when Blade walked in. Blade was always deferential to his superiors, and never took a liberty; but the vision of Bold in his war-paint was almost too much for him. He touched his forehead as he had touched it before, but could scarcely keep his gravity. 'How do you do, sir? Glad to see you, sir. That's a very 'ealthy way to wear the 'air, sir. I used to wear mine like that when I was coachman to Sir John Pakington, sir. Yes, sir.'

CHAPTER IV.

SLIGHTLY REVOLUTIONARY. -

In 1869 a ferment of Civil Service reorganisation set in, which has lasted, in greater or less activity, up to the present day; and some hard things have been done in the name of reform. It was determined by their lordships to reduce the establishment—first by voluntary retirement, and secondly by selecting the older men, with any others who might

be considered inferior in ability, for enforced superannuation. Wrong was done in some cases; one deserving public servant, who had struggled through hard times to bring up a large family, was sent away, at a critical time in his fortunes, with a small pension, and, ultimately, was driven out of his mind. *Scroop et hoc genus omne* were evicted at the same time with scant ceremony, and little sympathy from their brethren; while some younger men, who were glad to escape from a sphere in which talent had but small chance of a fair reward, embraced the opportunity to free themselves from Government control.

Bohns was a youngish man, whom no one would suspect of any intention to set the Thames on fire, and, therefore, he was one of those marked out to receive a final *congé*.

It was rough on a man thirty-five years of age, without a profession and with very moderate abilities, to be forced to begin the world anew, a world in which competition is so great and the prizes so few. He fought hard to be retained—pleaded that he was a married man, and that to send him away would be to condemn him to poverty, perhaps to ruin. His pleading was all to no purpose, so he put another face upon it.

He went to the chief clerk with a resigned aspect. 'Since it seems I must go, sir,' said he, 'I must try to get something to do in the City. I suppose you will not object to give me a testimonial that may recommend me for employment elsewhere?'

The chief clerk was pleased with his altered tone, and willingly testified to the abilities and invariable good conduct of Mr. Bohns. The head of the depart-

ment was also moved to give him a certificate enlarging upon his best points, and commending him to any possible employer who might want a good man.

The race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong, and Bohns was not such a fool as he looked. He chuckled as he put the certificates in his pocket, and proceeded forthwith to headquarters, to ask their lordships respectfully why he was to be discharged, seeing that the chiefs of his department had testified to the excellent character he bore. Explanation was at once called for, which was not so easy to give; and so in the end Bohns gained the victory, and was reinstated in his appointment.

Here I may notice, though not in relation to Mr. Bohns, that long continuance in the grooves of the public service sometimes tends to blunt the mental faculties, and circumscribe the exercise of individual judgment by subservience to rule and precedent. I was making some remark of this kind one day, *apropos* of a vexatious order from my chief, in the presence of a mechanic writer (one of the inventions of modern wisdom), when he replied, 'Yes, sir; my father served in Portsmouth Dockyard for forty years.' I said I did not mean to imply anything personal to his father, and I really begged his pardon. 'O dear, no, sir,' he replied; 'I was only going to say you were perfectly right. My father became very stupid in the latter years of his life.'

I may as well say, without further circumlocution, that the Government department in which I had the honour to serve the Queen for so many years of my life was the Admiralty. Its head, though never composed exclusively of wood, was called a Board, and

was located, with its shoulders (the secretary's staff) and one arm, at Whitehall, while the heart and great body were to be found in full vigour at Somerset House. The head, of course, would not have been of much use without the body; and, although the shoulders fairly prided themselves on their immediate proximity to the head, they had no greater claim to the possession of the brains than had any of the other members.

Of course the ultimate source of volition and directing energy existed in the gray matter in the convolutions beneath the calvarium; but at this point the simile of a human form loses its significance, for intelligence and the want of it were exhibited in about an equal ratio throughout the frame.

Once upon a time there was a First Lord who happened to be a peer, and, therefore, moved in the Upper House of Legislature; while in the House of Commons the Secretary of the Admiralty, Lord Percy Maintop, had most of the work to do in explaining and defending the policy and expenditure of the department.

Nature had dealt unkindly by the peer, whom she had not endowed with many of the graces of manly beauty. The Secretary was better looking; but he provoked remark from a moral aspect, for the statements he made in the House were frequently received with incredulity and derisive cries of 'Oh, Oh!' The Opposition, therefore, conceived a happy name to express their opinion of the duality, and called them 'Apollo and his *Lyre*.'

Nevertheless, Apollo was a very good administrator, and his Secretary was in no way inferior.

The latter was a free-handed sailor, who, by report, was not

too proud to borrow of a friend if occasion demanded; and the following little story was told of him.

Mr. Puncheon, who was a dockyard officer and an incorrigible tuft-hunter, never lost an opportunity to entertain a lord when he could catch one; and he had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Lord Maintop in the official visits of the latter to the yard. When acquaintance had ripened into comparative friendship Mr. Puncheon was delighted to lend his lordship twenty pounds, and thenceforth dropped his noble friend's title and called him Maintop. A year or more elapsed, when Puncheon delicately reminded his lordship that he was in debt to him.

'Am I, indeed?' said Lord Percy.

'Yes. Don't you remember I lent you twenty pounds?'

'Ah, so you did, old fellow. Well, never mind; put that against calling me "Maintop."'

Thus was Mr. Puncheon taught a wholesome lesson; and so far goes the story. But Lord Percy was too good a fellow not to have paid the debt in the end, when he had sufficiently enjoyed his little joke and satisfied himself that the moral had gone home to the tuft-hunter's conscience.

Mr. Yorick, in the Secretary's department, was a man of original mind and occasionally eccentric habits. It was said that he one day walked down a corridor, and created some commotion in the precincts of their lordships' apartments by kicking over all the coalscuttles standing at the doors of the respective offices ready to be carried into the rooms.

This gentleman was, no doubt, clever, or he would not have held the post of private secretary to Sir Melbourne de Roods. Sir

Melbourne had left one afternoon to attend in his place in the House of Commons, but, returning unexpectedly, found his private secretary sitting before the fire smoking a cigar, with his feet elevated to the mantelpiece, Yankee fashion.

'I won't have this, Yorick.'

'Won't have what?'

'Smoking, sir; and at this time in the day.'

'It's past five o'clock.'

'It's no such thing, sir. Look at the clock,' replied Sir Melbourne, pointing to the timepiece between Yorick's boots, and getting decidedly flushed in the face.

'O, if you go by that darned thing, you'll never be right!'

'I'll report you to the Secretary, Mr. Yorick.'

'Bet you half a sovereign you don't!' said Yorick.

Sir Melbourne was a good-natured and jolly old admiral, fond of a cigar himself at the proper time; and though he had been waxing wroth, he was overcome by the cool imperturbability of Yorick, and fairly gave in to the ludicrous aspect of the whole situation.

Another well-known and universally-popular man in the Secretary's department was Aubrey. He had always held a responsible position as private secretary to one or other member of the Board; and if ever you wanted information on a subject within his province, it was a pleasure to ask for it—I say to ask for it, because you might not get it. His light-hearted, open, and charming manner captivated everybody. Appearing to tell you everything, like an accomplished diplomat he had, perhaps, told you nothing. He might, on the other hand, have extracted some useful information from you; and how many and how weighty were the secrets

within his breast, no living soul could estimate.

In his earlier days he had written an important letter on a minute made by an admiral of exceedingly blunt, and at times even rude, manners, for whom he was acting as secretary. The Admiral, not liking the letter, tore it in half, and asked in a rage what the something he had written in that way for.

'Those are the words of your minute,' said Aubrey.

'It's a lie, sir; they are not!'

Most men, after such an insult, would have returned an angry rejoinder, or left the room in scornful silence. But Aubrey knew his man better, and how to turn the tables upon him.

'Of course,' he said, 'it's not for me in my position to contradict you; but if I bring you your minute, and you find that it agrees with your letter, you will admit that I'm right, and that you are the liar!'

'Certainly I will,' said the Admiral, beginning to feel that he was getting the worst of it.

The minute was brought. It agreed with the letter exactly; and the Admiral, with many apologies, admitted that *he* was the liar.

The minutes of naval and other lords, especially when new to administrative business, are not always lucid or practical. I remember an illustration, which will serve to show that it is not always clear how to act upon them. Something had gone wrong at a foreign station, which had been duly reported by the admiral in command, commented upon in office, and submitted for decision. 'This is a nuisance,' was the only remark written and signed by our new naval lord; and the secretary had to make the best he could of it. He probably wrote to the admiral that 'he was di-

rected by their lordships to express their regret for the circumstances reported, which had received their careful consideration; he was to add that their lordships were not disposed, in this instance, to take any active steps, but they trusted that special care would be taken to avoid a repetition,' &c. &c.

The Prime Minister can create a lord, but cannot provide him with brains to guide him.

The revolution that had been gathering energy since the last new Government came into power burst upon the Admiralty in its full force in the decade commencing with 1870. The 'Beef and Pork Shop,' with other smaller divisions, was broken up and thrown for a time into wild confusion. Even as a comet might possibly be dissipated in these days of celestial phenomena, it disappeared, and the place thereof knew it no more; its nucleus fell into the central orb of light at Whitehall, and its great luminous tail, in which I was an atom, was absorbed into one of the principal planets revolving round that heavenly body, viz. the sphere of the Accountant-General of the Navy.

To revert to the simile of a human form—communication between the main body at Somerset House and the head at Whitehall had been carried on for generations by letters, messengers, and cabs, circulating continually through the great artery of the Strand; and it had been the vain effort of successive Ministries to bring body and head together.

A happy inspiration at last filled the mind of Mr. Childers, the then First Lord; and he took possession of some twenty different dwelling-houses in Spring Gardens, at the back of Whitehall—some in a row, and some

isolated. Those in a row he knocked into one vast rabbit-warren, by making holes through party-walls; and into these houses he crammed the mutilated remains of the body aforesaid; then went down to Parliament, and announced to an applauding House that he had put the whole Admiralty under one roof! There we were, under more roofs than ever—in bedrooms, attics, and back parlours, with the kitchens and every available space stuffed with musty records and decaying books. We blundered about in dark passages from house to house, over floors at varying levels, through the holes in the party-walls, up one bedroom staircase and down another, wasting more time in this way than had been lost in coming and going through the Strand.

And this ramshackle, makeshift congeries of buildings, connected by tortuous covered ways with Whitehall, was the 'Admiralty'—one of the first and most important of the Government offices of Great Britain! I shall come back to this point further on.

The Admiralty had been ruled over by Dukes and Baronets for many years, and it was a sudden descent to come down at once to plain Mr. Childers; but he made amends in zeal and activity for all he might lack in rank and title. He was not unpopular; either at sea or ashore, except, perhaps, with the less fortunate few superannuated against their will, whose only consolation was *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, and who had to suffer extinction, as some must in all sweeping reforms, for the presumed advantage of the public or the service.

Mr. Childers was the only First Lord who really rose to the true conception and sublime height of

his position, and this he did when he took command of the Channel Fleet. There was a quaintness, no doubt, in his assumption of such a function as that of a flag officer afloat; but he was fully justified by the fact, not, perhaps, universally known, that he was Chief of the 'Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom;' and he was, therefore, only carrying out to the letter the duties incumbent upon him.

Moreover, it does not detract from the dignity of a First Lord, if he can append to his staff a real hereditary lord as an understrapper; on the contrary, it visibly exalts his position above a mere titled aristocracy, pays a compliment to democratic sentiment, and a homage to true worth. Accordingly a noble lord was found to sit at the footstool of Mr. Childers. He wrote his minutes always in red ink, and signed them with a big C in the same republican colour.

Unfortunately Mr. Childers's health broke down, under circumstances of the most distressing nature, and the reforms which he had initiated were left to be finished or not by his successors.

Mr. Goschen, who followed him as First Lord, is no doubt a man remarkable among politicians for ability and for honesty of purpose; but the great scope of his mind is apt to present for his choice three courses where another man would see but one, and his very desire to be honest and just creates hesitation and retards decision.

Hence it came to pass that the intended reforms of Mr. Childers were only in part accomplished, while some were deflected into a course very wide of that contemplated by their originator. The old machinery of the department had been taken to pieces, and

thrown into more or less confusion, and the designer of that which was to supersede it no longer directed its construction. The master-hand was gone; and by the time Mr. Goschen gave place to Mr. W. H. Smith, the plan of Mr. Childers had been lost in a maze of change.

The last state of the Admiralty as a reorganised department was thus worse than the first.

To return now to the offices themselves.

Towards the end of 1876 it began to be evident by the amount of illness in the buildings at the back of Whitehall that there was something wrong in the sanitary conditions under which the men who spent the best part of their days in them were living. Many were invalided, and for longer periods than at all common. In the course of six months as many deaths took place. Some of these were traceable directly to defects of drainage or causes of similar nature; but all the deaths, I have little doubt, if not the immediate result of such defects, were hastened by the unwholesome conditions in which the men were compelled to carry on their avocations. In one case a drain-pipe was found to be leaking into a cistern. In another a disused bath was discovered under the floor, with open pipes communicating with the sewers. A *cabinet* was found in a lavatory adjoining a room occupied by one of the invalided men, simply fastened up, with its fixtures untouched, and without water to arrest the passage of sewer-gas into the offices. The details of imperfections of this kind cannot be included in these pages, but they were highly discreditable.

When the evil became a crying one, the most apparent and active causes of disease and mortality

were removed; but the fact still remains that the greater part of the officers of the Admiralty are located in temporary offices never intended for permanent occupation as such, and utterly unfitted for the purpose.

The War Office is in much the same plight, and has been so, like the Admiralty, for many years.

That these two great departments of the State should be so badly accommodated is a national disgrace. It has, no doubt, been felt so by successive Governments, and project after project has been put forward for building suitable edifices. But nothing is yet done.

It is to be hoped that after so much delay the offices, when they are built, will be architecturally worthy of the nation. Our public buildings sink into insignificance when compared with the noble structures that grace and adorn the cities of the Continent; and a journey to Munich and Vienna *via* Paris would not be a vain pastime for architects who may some day be called upon for competitive designs.

CHAPTER V.

A PLEA FOR DUMB ANIMALS—THE MORAL.

GOVERNMENT *employés*, as such, have no politics and no prejudices. They serve equally well all masters; and, at least in the superior departments, they have been conspicuous for honesty and honour. They are constantly in possession of information affecting political or commercial interests that would be well worth purchase by intriguing or dishonest persons, but they have been true to their trust, whatever temptation may have presented itself; and I can state from inci-

dents within my own knowledge that their steadfast sense of duty and honour in these respects is not always unassailed.

The continuity of this traditional honesty will be rudely broken some day if the new system of employing a class of underpaid officers in responsible occupations is adhered to.

Given two or three unprincipled persons in collusion—their wits sharpened by their needs—it would be a matter of no great difficulty to devise a successful scheme of fraud. And as to the sale of valuable information, there will always be a buyer when the commodity is purchasable.

From all I can remember of an experience of four years in the Marine Ticket Department, I am of opinion that low pay and bad prospects were the cause of most of the evil that was rampant in that pandemonium, and that the penny-wise policy of the Government in which the cause originated was injurious also to the interests of the nation, so far as such interests were involved in the conduct of the business affected.

The officials, constantly hampered by pecuniary difficulty, could not possibly devote their full energies to the discharge of their public duties; and when to a weary load of care was added the blank outlook before them—the absence of any reasonable prospect of promotion—it is not surprising that many were depressed and a few were reckless, and that the whole tone of the office was demoralised.

Some of the more enterprising men, like Good with his beer-taps, endeavoured to add to their income by employing their spare hours in commercial transactions, in which they were as likely as not to 'burn their fingers,' and make bad worse. But I could

point to more than one young fellow of great promise who might have made his mark in the world, who was ruined by being brought within the baneful influences at work in that wretched establishment.

Yet the tendency of the Government in recent times points to the employment of more cheap labour in the Civil Service. The next generation will find out the mistake. It is better economy to pay a fair price for good work than to multiply underpaid and discontented servants, whose work will be worth as much as you pay for it perhaps, but certainly not more, and who will continually agitate for increased wages. Theorists, like Mr. Playfair, may experiment as they will, but a Civil Service army of cheap men and expensive officers will not work.

I speak with some confidence after a practical experience of thirty years, and without prejudice, because I have been long enough free from professional influences or personal interest in the question.

The permanent Civil Service conducts the secretarial and a great part of the executive responsibilities of the nation. Important Government offices should therefore not be degraded by efforts to level them down to conditions proper to the warehouse and the counter. They should be models for imitation, not bad copies of commercial establishments.

In the higher departments there is little room for the mechanical writer, who in many cases is employed under false pretences, doing work for which, according to the theory of those who invented him, he is not qualified and is certainly not paid.

The permanence of the employ-

ment offered by the Government, coupled with the deferred advantage of a retiring allowance, are sufficient to induce good men to compete for appointments at fair and moderate remuneration, and Government can always command the best material without descending into the market to obtain a 'cheap' article.

There is a creed, perhaps more affected than real, professed by certain cynics among an enlightened public, that Civil Servants are more given to play than to work; but if my '*Tales out of School*' tend in any degree to confirm that belief, their teaching is in such degree erroneous. My stories of the Service are gathered from an experience extending over nearly thirty years, and are written only with a view to amuse. They illustrate phases of life, vagaries and eccentricities, that will be found to repeat themselves in some form wherever mankind are associated in common employment. But the enormous amount of onerous work entailed in the management of home and foreign, naval, military, and civil affairs of an empire such as ours, could not be got through efficiently, as, after making all allowance for criticism, it must be admitted to be, without a high average of steady industry and

sound intelligence to conduct it. The Civil Service is the permanent machinery of Government, but if the machinery were without brain of a high order, the Ministry of the day would quickly flounder. As to industry, there are officials to be found, unhappily, who work too hard, by a needless ferreting into petty details that should be left to the responsibility of those below them. These are they who, if they be near the top of the tree, double the work of their juniors by questioning every fact and requiring chapter and verse for every proposition. Unable to accept the broad and obvious view that approves itself to common sense and judgment, they demand precedent and authority, hamper the progress of business, and delay the settlement of the most unimportant question by multiplying vexatious correspondence, till the point that raised it is well-nigh lost beneath the superstructure of foolscap heaped upon it.

Under such men as these life in a Government office is not all beer and skittles; they worry themselves and every one who has the misfortune to come within the radius of their octopus-like feelers. The happy despatch should be offered to them.

DANCES.

SHAKE hands with your hostess, and enter the room,
Prepare to be festive, and banish all gloom.
'O, how do you do?' 'Will you give me a dance?'
They ask with an interrogative glance;
Then a writing down of unreadable names.
Ah, here is the man who the first dance claims!
Then a gliding round in an awful crush,
At the end of the dance the usual rush
For a seat on the stairs, and some lemonade
(Which seldom, I fear, from lemons is made);
Then a change of partners, though much the same
Are one's partners at dances, a trifle tame;
The usual question, 'Have you been gay?'
Why do not these men find some new thing to say?
They talk of the music, the dancing, the floor,
And sometimes you feel it an awful bore
To talk to a man whom you scarcely know,
Whom you call to yourself 'Mr. So-and-so,'
Whom never again in your life you may see;
And then, if you did, the chances would be
That to-morrow you'd cut him, and think no more
Than, 'Where have I seen that face before?'

But if partners were all such as these, who'd go
To a dance where the dancers were all so slow?
Yet I'm told, and, indeed, perhaps they are right,
How sometimes a waltz is a great delight—
When four feet trip it in perfect time,
And two hearts ring out a single chime.
But this is only what I am told;
I would not assert it, I'm not so bold.
Whilst cynics inquire, What is the charm
Which lurks in a masculine, black-sleeved arm
Put round your waist to help you round
(Dear me, how prosaic the words do sound!)
Whilst you with your well-gloved hand hold fast
To the gentleman's elbow, and waltz at last?
But those are the cynical ones who talk;
Without loving, or flirting, through life *they* walk.
What can *they* know, as they look askance,
Of all that makes up a perfect dance?
I bid them listen, ye all as well,
To this good little moral that I would tell—
Nothing in life is ever tame
When heart and soul are in the game.

THE FOREIGNERS.

BY ELEANOR C. PRICE, AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS,'
'VALENTINA,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

A RASH MOMENT.

ALL that afternoon, while his cousin and her lawyer were settling his prospects in life, Mr. Dunstan was visiting people in his parish. He disliked this employment, yet it was a relief to him to bestow a few hearty scoldings where they were wanted, and to-day, perturbed as he was by Miss Mowbray's announcement in the morning, his poor parishioners found him crosser than usual. The more he thought about being owner of Croome, the less he liked it. It seemed to him very hard upon the Mowbrays, though not exactly unfair to them, for of course the place was old Dunstan property, and he, as far as he knew, was the only existing representative of the name. If it had been unfair, he would have made a great deal more difficulty about it; would, in fact, he assured himself, have refused to have anything to do with it. As it was, he knew almost by instinct that both Mr. and Mrs. Mowbray expected their aunt to leave everything to Pauline, even more now that she seemed to have adopted her; and he himself believed that Miss Mowbray, before she discovered him, had intended something of the kind—perhaps had even made a will to that effect. This knowledge made the new arrangement painful and disagreeable to Ben: he heartily hated the thought that Pauline might

have to choose between him and poverty. It seemed to take all the romance out of his love for her. The happy tender fancy which, since he came to Croome, had flowered among his stern realities, of winning her in time to trust and like him, and to marry him in the end because she liked him better than anybody else—this pleasant doubtful twilight of hope, like a gray summer morning, was really to his mind more hopeful than the glaring scorching sunshine of riches, which seemed to burn all uncertainty away.

'She would marry me if she knew of it,' Ben thought to himself. 'If she didn't care much herself they would make her, they would persuade her. They would bully her into it, Lucia and all; and the worst of it is, I know she can't keep her own counsel; she will tell Pauline to-night or to-morrow, and then I shall be a different person at once. I wish unmarried people had to leave their property to the nation. Well, after all,' he went on reasoning, 'I'm an ass, you know. If I get her in the end, what does it matter how the thing comes about? Perhaps the money won't really have made any difference, but I shall always think it did. And we should have done so much better without it; for if I have her, and Croome and the whole thing, I know I shall get fat and lazy, and stick here like a useless fungus all my life. I've been here

too long already, that is the truth. I ought to have gone away as soon as I was strong; this sort of place is ruin to one's soul. Pretty faces, rich people insisting on leaving one things—how is a fellow to work himself free of it all? and he thought of various cases like his own in the world's history, with reflections which were not too complimentary, either to Miss Mowbray or Pauline.

He lighted his pipe after leaving the last cottage, and walked down a high stony lane, bordered with walls where ferns and ivy grew, with young fir plantations behind them here and there. Before him stretched a wide lonely view, grand in its outlines, with rising and falling sweeps of distant down and field and wood. The horizon was blue and near, and great lurid thunder-clouds were rising, almost rushing up the sky, though not a breath of air moved the trees where Ben was walking. He was surprised, for, thinking of other things, he had not noticed the weather, and he quickened his pace and called his dog from hunting in the bracken; a heavy storm was coming up, and would be upon them in a few minutes. Ben was not a thorough country Englishman, and did not much like a wetting, except under certain circumstances. He remembered just then, with some sadness, that same little incident of overtaking Pauline and carrying the basket to old Betty Stocks, which had come into her mind as she sat on the terrace at Bois carré. This was the very hill where it had happened: the wind was the other way then, and the rain drove in their faces as they climbed it together.

Near the end of the lane there was a gate, from which a short road across a field led to the rec-

tory: this was not the chief entrance, which was nearer the church and lower down the hill, but it was a convenient way to and from the higher part of the parish, and it was the Rector's way home now. Before opening the gate he glanced down the lane, and away in the valley he could see the tall trees and the chimneys of Croome Court. There was a short cut across the fields, which he made use of constantly; and now, as he looked that way, and felt he must resist the temptation and stay at home this evening, the field-gate opened, and Pauline herself, with a basket in her hand, came walking rather quickly up the lane. Ben at his gate was hidden at first by a holly-bush, and she started a little when she saw him standing there waiting for her, having deposited his pipe on one of the gate-posts.

'There's going to be a thunder-storm, and you will be caught in it,' said Ben, looking at her gravely.

'Is there? yes, I'm afraid so,' said Pauline, looking round at the sky. 'I shall get to old Betty's first, I hope. I am taking her something for Aunt Lucia,' with a mischievous smile for Ben, who did not, however, launch out into his theories. He only said,

'I have just been there, and the house is locked up. Betty is at her daughter's, on the other side of the hill. You and your basket will both get a soaking.'

'How tiresome! I had better go home,' said Pauline. 'Aunt Lucia has got Mr. Johnson with her, and she told me to go out for a walk, and not to come back till he was gone. But it seems I can't help it.'

'You will get the worst of the storm on your way down the hill. It is beginning now. Listen.'

There was a growl of thunder

on the other side of the valley, and the dark masses of cloud came crowding up, hanging heavily over their heads, while two or three great drops of rain fell on the stony ground between them.

'Come in and take shelter,' said Ben.

If Pauline felt any hesitation, she did not show it. Ben took her basket, and they walked together across the field to the house. They were just in the garden when the first flash of lightning, almost blinding in its brilliancy, was followed by a crash of thunder that seemed to shake the ground. Then the rain came down suddenly like a water-spout. Ben caught Pauline's hand, and they ran along the path and into the porch together.

'That was a near thing,' said Ben cheerfully.

He was looking his best just then; all frowns had disappeared, and his eyes, which were really fine, had their brightest and happiest expression. Pauline, flushed and smiling, did not seem at all displeased with her situation.

'The question is,' she said, 'how am I to get these things to old Betty? Had I better take them back, and come again to-morrow? or will it be safe to leave them with you?'

'It's a difficult point—you had better think it over,' said Ben. 'You will have time, for the storm won't be done just yet. Come in, please.'

He took her into the drawing-room, a pretty room with two windows looking into the garden, but with an uninhabited feeling about it, and rather dark and chilly in the rain. It was not so comfortable as many bachelors' rooms, and yet there was nothing ugly in it; it had the making of a charming room, as Miss Lucia Mowbray had often reflected, when she was building castles for Ben;

she rather liked the severity of its chairs and its polished floor, its intelligent-looking bookcase, and the few prints from good pictures which were pleasant companions on the wall. While Pauline went to the window to look out at the rain, Ben lighted the fire, which blazed up cheerfully, and pushed forward his best chair.

'Do you like a lower chair? There's one in my den. I'll fetch it,' he said, half in apology for a certain discomfort which struck him with new force suddenly.

'O no, thank you—but I didn't want a fire. It is very pleasant, though, in such weather,' she said, correcting herself; and she came and sat down by the fire, and held out her hands to it, glancing up with a smile at Ben as he stood on the other side.

He did not look quite the same as usual. They say that a woman always knows when a man is in love with her; but one fancies there may be exceptions to this rule. If she is young and pretty and ambitious, and not a flirt by nature—and if he, besides being unattractive, keeps a stern guard over himself—still more when she becomes preoccupied with the thought of somebody else, beside whom all other men are merely stocks and stones—I think she may meet her unknown lover and talk to him a dozen times a day, without finding him out in spite of himself—that is, till he begins to hope a little. Then by some look or word or silence he will almost certainly betray himself.

Pauline, of course, had not been unconscious that Ben admired her, or that she could trust his friendship further than that of most people. She liked and respected him more than he knew, and did not much mind his peculiarities; but certainly till that

day, having no idea of Aunt Lucia's wishes, and paying no attention to the teasing hints of the children, she had never thought of him at all in the light of a lover. Even now it was nothing more than a momentary suspicion which crossed her mind; the thing was impossible, absurd, not worth thinking of, and she determined to ignore it completely.

The storm was a great help: for some time it was tremendous, and gave one every excuse for watching it and talking about it. Every two or three minutes the room was lit up by an unearthly glare of lightning, and the thunder, which roared immediately, shaking the house, and making conversation an absurdity, went growling and grumbling on till the next flash came. Pauline sat very still; she was not afraid of the storm, but it awed her a little, and she thought of Aunt Lucia's anxiety. Ben walked about from one window to the other, watching the rain, which came tearing down in sheets from the black clouds, and in the intervals of comparative peace talking about electricity. Now and then there was a long pause, while the elements had it all their own way, and Pauline looked at the crackling fire and mused on the chances of getting home. In quite a measurable space of time, she felt, this sort of thing would become a bore.

'Your aunt will have Mr. Johnson to herself for a good long time,' said Ben, walking up to the fireside.

'Yes; she will be rather bored, won't she? But I suppose they have plenty of business to talk about. She said something about half an hour; but Mr. Johnson is a talkative old man, isn't he? I don't think he would have let

her off as easily as that, even if there had been no storm.'

'No; he will have an opinion, and the case will be argued, though your aunt, of course, will end by having her own way.'

'People ought to have their own way in their own affairs,' said Pauline, smiling.

'Not always; there are abstract principles,' said Ben. 'Do you know what the special business is this afternoon?'

'No,' she said, a little surprised. 'Do you?'

Ben did not answer at once; he was not quite prepared for this counter question, and looked down, frowning, to collect his ideas.

'If I did,' he said, 'it might not be right for me to tell you.'

'You would leave me in painful curiosity; how very horrid of you!' said Pauline. 'But if you know, and I don't, I shall be dreadfully hurt, and very much offended both with Aunt Lucia and you. In fact, I am now, for I saw Aunt Lucia consulting you this morning in the garden. So the only thing you can do is to tell me at once.'

Pauline was certainly herself again. Her eyelashes lifted with a laughing glance at Ben, who was trying to be grave and sulky, but looking chiefly foolish.

'Don't tease me,' he said, in a gruff voice. 'I shall not tell you anything about it.'

'Thanks; that is so kind of you,' said Pauline.

After this they were both quite silent for several minutes. The thunder and lightning were going off, but the rain was still coming down in a steady deluge. Pauline looked round at the window once or twice, and half hid a little yawn. Ben, after some reflection, determined to let that awkward subject drop. He did not quite

care for being laughed at, and would not allow himself to be weak, even if the alternative was being disagreeable. At the same time his guest must be entertained somehow, and Ben thought he might find some general subject which would be safe and satisfactory. At heart he was rather savage, and knew, with a half-conscious pain, that he loved to see Pauline brighten and laugh, even at his expense, and would have knelt down at her feet there and then with the risk of being only laughed at more.

'Would you care to be rich?' he said abruptly.

'Yes; I should like it of all things,' said Pauline; and then she looked up with a shade of interest and curiosity, wondering why he had asked the question. It was an odd question for him to ask, she thought, considering all the circumstances. Ben, who had spoken as men generally do, without any double meaning, was a little disappointed by her answer, which he took quite literally, and without the least understanding the look that accompanied it.

'Would you, really?' he said. 'Why?'

'For every reason under the sun. I need not count them—I couldn't.'

'Give me one.'

'Well, for papa and the others, if it is a personal question,' said Pauline, half smiling; but she knew that he believed her, with all his cynical pretences.

'You might be rich without being able to help them,' said Ben gravely.

'Then I should not call myself rich. But I don't quite understand you.'

'There are different ways in which money may come to a woman. Of course, if it is left to

her straight away, she is independent, and can do what she likes with it—give it all to her friends if she chooses. But the other way—marrying a man with money—that doesn't always mean that she will have plenty to throw away. The more a man has, the less he cares, sometimes—I mean that he might be willing to spend thousands a year on *you*, but not at all on your brothers and sisters.'

'I see—he had better be avoided,' said Pauline carelessly. 'On the whole, I'll choose to have the money independently, and then I can follow all my fancies. I don't believe, you know, that there is anybody who wouldn't like to be rich, if possible.'

'Don't you?' said Ben.

'No, I don't. You would, I'm sure. If you say no I shall not believe you.'

Ben smiled. 'Very good; that saves trouble.'

'You don't pretend to be contented, do you?' Pauline went on rather restlessly; the soft unruffled serenity of her younger days had certainly passed away. 'You don't feel that you can do everything you like?'

'Far from it; but it is not want of money that hampers me.'

'I think you will find it is, in the end,' said Pauline. 'Money can do almost everything, for one's self and other people too.'

'Almost everything,' Ben assented. 'But, you see, the things I want are just the things that money could not give me—at least I hope it couldn't,' he added in a lower voice.

Her way of talking made him a little nervous. He had imagined that she was perfectly unworldly, that money could never be of any consequence to her personally, however other people might seek it and value it for her. He now

suspected that she might some day marry a man—himself, even—for his money, without much persuasion from her relations; and he felt sad and bitter and cynical at heart.

Pauline little knew how seriously her talk was taken, but she did not care for the subject enough to go on with it. She got up and went to the window, suddenly finding out that the rain was much less, that the clouds were rolling away, that she would soon be released, and able to go where she liked.

Mr. Dunstan began asking her advice about some bank in the garden, which he thought of turning over and planting with shrubs. Then he took her into his study, a bare and very smoky little room, and showed her where he was going to put a new bookcase, and consulted her about a bow-window. She entered into his plans with gentle pleasantness, her teasing humour having passed away.

‘Do you dislike this house?’ said Ben, as they stood in the study window, which commanded a view of a different tract of sky.

‘No, I like it. It is cheerful, even on a wet day,’ said Pauline politely.

‘You couldn’t live in such a house.’

‘Do I give myself such airs?’ she said a little playfully; and then she added with a shade of sadness, ‘our new home is much smaller, I suppose, and the others have to live there. Might I say something without offending you?’

Ben was suddenly interested in the window-blind, which he pulled down and up twice before he answered her.

‘What?’

‘I know it offends you to be thanked,’ she said, smiling; ‘but I know, too, that you are that friend who is so good to Philip.

I’m sure of it, and so is Aunt Lucia. I’m not going to thank you; I only wanted to tell you that I know it.’

‘Very well, that’s enough; you are two wise women,’ said Ben, more patiently than she had expected. ‘Now there is something I want to say to you, which will probably offend you, and will seem absurd, after all you have been saying to-day. I ought, perhaps, to have been discouraged; perhaps I am, but that’s nothing. Could you make up your mind to live here?’

The sturdy Ben behaved at this crisis in a cowardly manner. He did not look at her as he spoke, and half turning away, seized the blind-tassel and tugged it violently.

Pauline was horror-struck, and stood perfectly silent. Many thoughts and visions chased each other through her brain in that half-minute; she was far enough from the bare little study, and Ben Dunstan, poor honest creature, was nowhere. Her heart and her mind had both been hurt in France, more seriously than people knew; and though that kind illness made it all seem a long time ago, the bruises were still there, and could not be touched without pain. She was roused from her dream by Ben’s voice. He turned round so suddenly, that she started and shrank back towards the door; but he spoke very quietly. Her face, her quick avoiding movement, were answer enough for him.

‘I see you can’t,’ he said. ‘I’m sorry I asked you.’

There was another pause, and this time he stood sadly looking at her.

‘I am very sorry,’ Pauline murmured after a moment.

‘No, you are not; why should you be?’ said Ben. It has stop-

ped raining. Would you like to go home now? I advise you to keep to the road; the fields will be swimming.'

He went out of the room, and along the hall to the front door. Pauline followed him silently. At the door she gave him her hand, glancing shyly up for a moment. She was faintly amused, as well as surprised and sorry, at what had happened; but, of course, this did not appear in her face, and even the feeling died away under his earnest gaze. Ben might be uncouth, but he was not in the least ridiculous.

'Good-bye—thank you,' said Pauline.

'I suppose I ought to have waited; but I had a reason,' said Ben. 'It might have made no difference, though.'

'No, never any difference,' she answered gently. 'I am very sorry. Please forget all about it.'

'Forget all about it—yes,' said Ben.

He did not attempt to go with her, even through the garden; but as soon as she had set out over the wet gravel, under the still threatening sky, he turned back into his house and shut the door.

CHAPTER XXII.

MISS MOWBRAY'S TROUBLES.

THE more Pauline thought about her adventure of that afternoon, the more it vexed and troubled her. She had been succeeding so well in silencing recollections, in refusing to think of such things, and throwing all her interest into home affairs, entering eagerly into the boys' plans, writing long letters to them and Kitty, laughing with Aunt Lucia over her flowers, sympathising and helping in her charities. There

really seemed to be plenty of harmless pleasant occupation to fill up every day, and she was beginning to sleep without dreams at night. Ben Dunstan's sudden attempt at love-making bored her inexpressibly. She did not want to think of any life but Aunt Lucia's, simple and free from care. Ben, of course, did not touch her heart in the least; and, though she was sorry for him at the moment, further reflection made him seem both presumptuous and stupid. Why should he have suggested such a thing at all? He had had no encouragement, no right to expect any answer but one. Why could not the tiresome man have left things on their old comfortable footing—he and she and Aunt Lucia all nice and friendly together? Now there would be a horrid awkwardness—at least Pauline feared so; but she thought she would not tell Aunt Lucia, who would certainly see it as she did, and be angry with him for his stupidity. Yes, Pauline thought it would be kinder to keep his secret, though he hardly deserved such consideration. Some day she might tell her mother, but not in a letter, perhaps to fall into the hands of the children. Thinking of them brought Philip to her mind, and his great debt of gratitude to Mr. Dunstan: one must confess that he had merits, that he was very kind and generous; but Philip's sister could not see that she was bound to pay his debt for him, and she did Ben the justice of believing that he did not think so either.

When she got home that afternoon, tired and wet and troubled, she found Mr. Johnson gone, and her aunt in the highest spirits; she was walking about the house singing, playing with a kitten, and so flighty was her state of

mind that she had forgotten all about the thunderstorm, and only half understood when Pauline, giving her credit for a little anxiety, told her how she had been sheltered at the rectory.

'What fun!' said Miss Mowbray. 'I hope the parson was agreeable.'

'It was no particular fun. I was rather bored,' said Pauline quietly.

'Were you? Poor creature! I put him out of temper this morning,' said Aunt Lucia, much amused. 'But the visit ought to have charmed him. What took you there? I forget.'

'The thunderstorm,' said Pauline, looking gravely at her aunt, who was smiling and dangling a string to the kitten.

'To be sure. Forgive me, my child. I only thought you didn't generally pay visits to young men. I quite forgot the storm. Mr. Johnson was here all through it, you see; he is only just gone.'

'I hope he was satisfactory.'

'O, delightful! Much nicer than usual, for he agreed with me; so we had no trouble at all, and got through our business charmingly. I feel as happy and light-hearted as if I had dropped a bundle off my shoulders, like the man in the *Pilgrim's Progress*.'

'Your sins would not make a very heavy bundle,' said Pauline, her grave young face softening into a smile.

'My dear, that is all you know about it,' said Aunt Lucia, shaking her head. 'However, alas, it is not my sins I have dropped, but my responsibilities, which really were heavy. I don't mean that my sins are light; but I don't feel the weight of them so much, which is the fault of my bad useless conscience.'

Pauline, of course, concluded that Aunt Lucia had been making

her will, but she did not feel more than a very faint curiosity about its contents, and with her own vexation of that day weighing on her mind, she was rather silent all the evening, while her aunt laughed and chattered and gave hints from which a less absent person might have gained a good deal of information.

The next day Miss Mowbray took her niece to a large garden-party at Sir John Marston's, the county member, who lived at a beautiful house near Pauline's old home at Cleeve. Ben Dunstan had been asked to this party, and they believed that he intended to go, but, to Pauline's relief, and Miss Mowbray's disappointment, he was not there.

All the people welcomed Pauline very kindly; they were old neighbours, and it was her first appearance in the world since her illness and the misfortunes of her family. Everybody smiled upon her, and without any uncomfortable sympathy, for evidently she was not at all to be pitied; on the contrary, she appeared to them a more important person than ever before: her aunt had plainly adopted her, she would, of course, be heiress of Croome: what could be more right, more natural, more correct and comfortable? Grace and Adelaide Marston, very distinguished girls indeed, who had never cared much for Pauline Mowbray when she lived at Cleeve Lodge, now changed their minds and manners, and received her with the frank winning sweetness which they kept for their especial favourites. Adelaide Marston and her young brother, who had been snubbed for his admiration of Pauline in years gone by, finding that she was not strong enough to play tennis, walked or sat with her half the afternoon.

Every one was very happy, except Sir John Marston, who came up to his eldest daughter, and asked, with some irritation, what Jack was doing all this time.

'He is somewhere not far off, with Addie and Pauline Mowbray,' said Grace, with an indifferent air.

Sir John coughed and grunted.

'Jack's a donkey,' he observed. 'He had better not be a donkey. That nonsense over again!' with some more unpleasant mutterings.

'It might not be such nonsense, after all,' said Miss Marston, who was always very cool and superior in her manner to her father.

'You are mistaken; I have just been telling your mother so,' said Sir John gruffly. 'Old Miss Mowbray won't leave all that land to a girl. Johnson's her man of business; if she wanted to do it, he wouldn't let her. He knows that such things can't be done, especially when there is a proper male heir.'

'Who is the proper male heir?'

'Why, young Dunstan, of course. That Australian fellow—that parson at Croome.'

'That creature!' said Grace indignantly. 'He is third-rate, positively third-rate. What should we do with him in the county? O no, papa, I don't agree with you at all! Miss Mowbray would do very wrong, I am sure, if she left him Croome. We don't want him; he is a dreadful creature, really.'

'He is a preposterous ass, from all I hear,' said Sir John. 'But whatever he is, the man ought to have the land that belonged to his people.'

'I hope Miss Mowbray won't agree with you,' said Grace, half-frightened, for her father generally turned out to be right in the end. 'We don't want a third-rate creature like that at Croome.'

At this point Miss Marston looked round, and saw that the three young people in question, coming up quietly over the grass, were so near that they almost must have heard her last words. Her voice was naturally distinct, and she raised it when she spoke to her father, who was a little deaf. Adelaide was smiling, and in Pauline's cheeks there was an extra shade of pink. They had heard, evidently; but after all, what did it matter? She had been speaking in Pauline's interest, and though she could not, of course, say so, she must agree with her. They began talking about something else. Sir John walked off, leaving the young people together, and very soon Grace had forgotten the little awkwardness altogether.

Pauline, however, remembered the words, and knew very well of whom they were spoken. Angry with Ben as she had been, and glad as she was not to see him that afternoon, the words spoiled her pleasure and made her feel angry. If it had been desirable or possible, she would have spoken bravely for Ben at that moment. Ben was a gentleman by birth, though his bringing up and adventures had not been those of an ordinary gentleman; it seemed like a rudeness to Aunt Lucia to call her cousin 'third-rate' in that scornful manner. In old days Pauline had never liked Grace Marston, and now again she felt that she did not like her; it was the repulsion of a soft nature from a hard one. She was not amused any more by the friendly talk of Jack and Adelaide; she felt sad and lonely, and escaped as soon as she could to tell her aunt that she was tired, and would like to go home. Miss Mowbray was quite ready. She did not care particularly for the Marstons,

and was angry with Ben for staying away; so they set off early on their long drive back to Croome.

Pauline did not think, as Grace Marston's words went on tormenting her, that these people knew anything certain about her aunt's intentions with regard to Croome; it seemed impossible that they should. They were no doubt talking over the probabilities, Sir John and his daughter; 'talking over me,' thought Pauline. It was not a new idea to her; her own people had always fancied that she would be Aunt Lucia's heir, and now to herself it seemed likelier than ever before. But she was infinitely more indifferent to all hopes of the kind than she had pretended to poor Ben the day before; and, like her father, she loved Aunt Lucia far too much to care for the thought of succeeding her in anything.

That evening, after dinner, she was sitting alone in the drawing-room, rather weary and dispirited. The lamp was on the table, but she was doing nothing; Aunt Lucia was wandering outside in the dusk among the flowers. Presently Pauline heard her come into the hall and stop there; the drawing-room door was half-open, and she could hear her aunt tear open a letter. Then came a quick little exclamation, then silence for a minute or two; then Miss Mowbray walked into the drawing-room, her blue eyes shining, her delicate cheeks flushed with excitement.

'Read that,' she said, giving the letter to Pauline, who glanced through it, flushing too, and gave it back to her.

It was a letter from Ben Dunstan, saying that he had made up his mind to resign the living of Croome. He had long wished to do so, he said, but since their talk yesterday he had found out

that it could not be put off any longer. He might grieve and even offend her; he should be sorry for that, but there were worse things still, and he could only advise her to send once more for Mr. Johnson, and to make her arrangements for the future as if he did not exist. The letter was proud and stiff and sore; its expressions were ungracious, addressed to the kindest friend this young man had ever had. Pauline saw that her aunt was keenly pained by the letter, and did not know what to say, in her consciousness of having been the immediate cause of it.

'He is cracked. I don't know what he means!' said Miss Mowbray. 'You would think, wouldn't you, that I had done him some great injury? On the contrary, I've been planning to make him the luckiest and happiest man in the world. He knew it; I told him all about it yesterday morning, and actually made him say thank you. Now he is wild to shake off the dust of Croome, and doesn't care a straw whether I am vexed or not. He knows he could do nothing that would vex me more.'

'It seems a great pity,' murmured Pauline.

'Writing, too, instead of telling me face to face! I knew Ben had faults enough, but I always thought he had plenty of courage. I can't understand it. What can have happened since I saw him to bring him to the point of writing that letter? I declare I shall take him at his word, and send for Mr. Johnson again. O. my dear Pauline, why should a poor old woman have so many troubles?'

Pauline sat looking on the floor, and did not speak at once. She perceived that it might matter very much to Ben, if her aunt took this sudden resolve of his as a selfish unreasonable freak. She

was very unwilling; but it seemed her duty to give such explanation as she could, by telling her aunt what had happened yesterday. She did not imagine that this could be bad news, apart from its consequence of Ben's going away, and she felt half inclined to laugh as she began: 'Aunt Lucia, do you know, I'm afraid it is partly my fault. I was extremely surprised—and I'm sure I never did anything to put it into his head—but Mr. Dunstan asked me yesterday—'

'You don't mean to say so!' cried Aunt Lucia breathlessly, without waiting for the end of the sentence; and she sprang out of her chair, and came up to Pauline with both hands outstretched. 'In such a hurry! what a romantic idiot the man is! Dear old Ben—he did not want you to be influenced. But, Pauline, you said you were bored; you said he wasn't agreeable. Why didn't you tell me at once, you tiresome child?'

'Why should I?' said Pauline, with a little gentle wonder; 'one doesn't talk about those things.'

'Not to me! why, you are as unfeeling as Ben himself.'

'But, really,' persisted Pauline, 'one does not talk about a thing when one wants it forgotten. Don't you see, dear, I was very much surprised and bothered; but I told him at once that it never could be. I didn't think of driving him away from Croome—that seems a great pity, and rather stupid of him.'

Miss Mowbray turned away, and began walking about the room. After one or two despairing sighs, and tosses of her head, she came back and stood in front of Pauline.

'What a muddle he has made,' she said, 'and all with the best intentions! Of course he took

you by surprise, and it was all among the thunder and lightning, and the house looked dark and dingy, and Ben was as gruff as a bear—he couldn't expect you to say anything but no. Just like him, too, to take you at your word, and write me a savage letter like this. I don't mind it half so much, now that I know the meaning of it. And I'm not angry with you, for you were in a fix, and I should have done the same myself. Stupid creature!'

'Yes, I thought it was rather stupid of him,' said Pauline calmly.

'But there was something beautiful in it, too,' Miss Mowbray went on. 'He has been in love with you for years, as no doubt he told you, with my knowledge and approval. Well, yesterday morning I told him what I meant to do for him, and he was immediately tormented with the fear that when he asked you, you would accept him because of that, and not for his own merits—which are not so very small, in his opinion as well as mine. Now he is punished for his two suspicions—of your being mercenary, and of my being unable to keep a secret from you for a single day. Just like all men—but Ben shows his weaknesses more plainly than most of them.'

Pauline laughed, a little hardly; there was nothing to please her in what Aunt Lucia said; she did not like the idea of having been talked and planned about by these two excellent friends.

'He certainly was mistaken,' she said, 'if he thought that anything could make any difference. I told him so.'

'But you will think about it, and change your mind,' said Aunt Lucia. 'He can wait—for months—for a year—he might even go away for a time. Don't you see,

Pauline, I have left him Croome. It seemed the right thing to do, and Mr. Johnson agreed with me.'

She spoke in a sad pleading tone, standing before Pauline, who sat looking on the floor.

'Have you?' said the girl, without lifting her eyes. 'Yes, I daresay you are right. But, dear, that cannot make any difference to me.'

'I know, I know. I never thought it would,' said Aunt Lucia impatiently. 'But you are disappointing me so dreadfully. I thought of you all the time. I thought I was doing it for you as much as for him. I had set my heart upon it, Pauline. You can't make me so unhappy!'

'But, dear Aunt Lucia,' said Pauline, getting up, putting her arms round her, and kissing the troubled face, 'you can't wish me to marry a man I—don't even like?'

'Ah, you don't know how good he is,' sighed Miss Mowbray. 'He is as good as gold, and he would do anything in the world for you. Don't you believe that? Won't you come to your senses some day?'

'I do believe he is good,' Pauline answered; 'but one doesn't care for people because of that, you know. I shall always think of him as I do now. I'm chiefly sorry because it vexes you.'

'O, I was born to be vexed; pray don't think about me,' said Aunt Lucia, laughing.

She went on talking for a long time, not trying to persuade Pauline any more, for she saw that would be useless, but making the best of things, as her way was. She thought she would not oppose Ben's going, but would let him go, hoping that he would come to his senses in time, and know where his right place was. She

perceived that, after all, he was not so necessary, now that she had her dear pretty Pauline to live with her.

Pauline was rather amused to find herself entering earnestly into all Aunt Lucia's plans and ideas. Her aunt told her the contents of her will, making her promise to tell nobody, and talked seriously about the future, about duties and responsibilities, breaking off in the middle of it all into some sudden absurdity which made Pauline smile gently. They had never been such friends as they were that evening. Aunt Lucia certainly bore Pauline no malice for disappointing her.

'Well, my child,' she said at last, 'I must find somebody else for you.'

'No, please,' said Pauline; 'I am quite contented.'

'The difficulty will be to find anybody good enough,' her aunt went on, without noticing this. 'If you could have Croome it wouldn't matter; but now I am afraid you can't. I shall see, at least, how Ben behaves himself.'

'Aunt Lucia,' said Pauline, 'why did you never accept any of those people who wanted to marry you?'

'Because they wanted Croome, and not me. You won't have that difficulty, my poor child; but that is why you really must be married. An old maid must be rich if she is to be happy.'

'O, I don't know that,' said Pauline rather wearily.

Her aunt, who was wandering as usual about the room, stopped and looked at her. The most careless person could not help seeing the girl's look and attitude of tired depression, into which she seemed to fall back whenever she was not smiling or speaking. For the first time it occurred to Miss Mowbray that Pauline's late ill-

ness did not quite account for this background of sadness, which had been there, more or less visible, ever since she came to Croome.

Miss Mowbray crossed the room and sat down by Pauline, bending forward and taking her hands with a sudden eager tenderness. Her manner was irresistible, and Pauline could not turn away, though she shivered from head to foot with a knowledge of what was coming.

'My own child, tell me—is there somebody else? I see, I understand.'

'No, please don't think so.'

'Now you are trying to deceive me, and that is no use at all. My dear, who is he? can I ask him here? But it would be too cruel; we must wait till poor Ben is gone. Where does he live? Why didn't somebody tell me before? and why don't you look happier about it?'

'How you jump to conclusions!' said Pauline, half laughing, but with tearful eyes. 'You talk of asking a person here who does not exist.'

'Then he did exist. Am I hurting your feelings? Forgive me, dear, but I love you so much, and I am so dreadfully curious, I can't bear to have things hidden from me. I like to know people's histories all through when I love them. Is it quite hopeless? You can't deceive me, child; you had better trust me, and I may be able to help you—who knows?'

'Nobody can help, and nobody ever could,' said Pauline, in a low voice. 'It was always hopeless, and wrong, and wretched, and impossible from the beginning.'

'Good heavens, child! Wrong! Was he married?' exclaimed Aunt Lucia, in horror.

'Most likely he is by this

time. He was engaged then. Dear Aunt Lucia, if you love me, don't ask me about it any more. I can't bear it. I was a most dreadful idiot, and now I want to forget it all.'

'Of course; that is the only thing to do,' said her aunt hastily. 'Only do just have mercy upon me, and tell me his name.'

'Gérard de Maulévrier.'

'That Frenchman!' cried Aunt Lucia. 'Didn't I say so! Didn't I hate your going to France!' and she was obliged to calm herself with a few turns about the room. 'Beast!' she said, with immense energy; the word sounded comical from her refined lips.

'No, I can't let you say that,' said Pauline. 'It was as much my fault as his.'

It was impossible to check or withstand Aunt Lucia's eager interest, or not to answer her questions and her hasty inferences. Pauline soon found herself telling the whole story so quietly that she was astonished at herself, mentioning names and places and things that she had thought she could never bear to speak of again. Aunt Lucia was full of sympathy: she caressed the child a great deal, and said a great many silly things.

'Now you know all, and I must go to bed,' said Pauline at last, looking up and smiling through tears. 'You will never tell any one, will you?'

Miss Mowbray put her arms round her neck and kissed her affectionately.

'I'm glad he is a Frenchman,' she said, 'because I may hate him as much as I please. I do hate him, you know, and I think it is the most ridiculous story I ever heard. Tell any one! *Pas si bête*—to use your favourite language.'

(To be continued.)

OUR STATION-MASTER.

No person is more deservedly popular in his way than our station-master. I ought properly to say our late station-master; for having held various positions of trust in the services of the company, and having been station-master for many years after working his way up from an obscure origin, not many months ago he resigned his dignified office. What made him a more interesting personage was that he almost embodied in himself the fortunes of this particular branch of the Great Diddlesex. During his time we have developed from an obscure country village into a bustling town; our single line has been doubled; our station has been rebuilt. Mr. Rogerson did everything for us in a very comfortable way. Before the business became so very heavy he was not above delaying the train for a few minutes for the convenience of a friend or neighbour, and has even stopped it after it has started. Very civil and attentive he was to all the regular customers of 'the company.' We know that late in life he came in for a legacy, and it is a cherished belief among many of us that this was bequeathed to him by an old lady whom he assiduously furnished with foot-warmers whenever she travelled in cold weather. Moreover, if any of us had a large party which necessitated late hours, our station-master, on a little gentle persuasion, would stop the mail for us. Whether he did this on his own warrant, or after communication with the mighty powers in London, was a point

about which, for conscience' sake, we asked no question; only the point was achieved, very much to our satisfaction. In the old days, before the telegraph was transferred to the post-office, he used to take a parental and somewhat patronising interest in all our domestic affairs. 'Very sorry, sir, that your aunt's no better,' he used to say to me at a time when daily telegrams were announcing to me the advancing illness of my esteemed and lamented relative; or, 'Very glad, sir, that you have had that money paid in; it must have been a great weight off your mind,' when some vexed commercial transaction was concluded through the wires. In fact, our station-master for years held the clue of all our histories and destinies in his hands, and took a keen intellectual interest in this vast province of human knowledge. He was a sort of irregular father confessor, who knew everything about us. I think we all felt a little relief when the business was transferred to the post-office—a fine new one, be it observed—where the work was distributed among several clerks and there was an absence of a supervising mind. In no respect, however, did Mr. Rogerson abuse his great powers. His official duties did not allow him to attend church, as he told our clergyman with great gravity and regret one day; but his wife and two daughters were invariably seen in some of the best sittings, and mingled very freely in some of the best middle-class society of the neighbourhood.

I question if the retirement of a Cabinet Minister could be to us of greater social importance than the retirement of Mr. Rogerson, our station-master. We are sure that he had made it very difficult for a successor. Our station-master stood well with all of us. I question if the doctor or parson received any better presents during the game season. As he had done us a lot of little friendly offices, we, in return, when he retired, got him up a handsome testimonial. I should rather say that we gave him a couple of testimonials. There was a public dinner, at which our vicar took the chair, and our local attorney acted as *croupier*. Our station-master made quite an affecting speech in returning thanks. There was a full report of it in our local *Reporter and Herald*, and the whole affair was considered, with justice, one of the most complete things, in its way, that had ever happened in our time. We gave him, however, a still more satisfactory testimonial. We 'teapotted' him, to use a phrase which our young curate had brought into fashion. We gave him a teapot which was partially filled with a considerable number of bright golden sovereigns, procured brand new from the Royal Mint for the occasion. We had heard that Mr. Rogerson had dropped in for a tidy little legacy, which had helped him to retire before his time, and I think that the fact that he stood in no need of money materially influenced a good many of us in resolving to present him with some. I have reason to believe that he felt a little queer when his occupation was gone. He pervaded his late dominions to a considerable extent. On one occasion, when a wretched clerk was a minute late at the wicket, he began to give out

tickets, and even made out some documents for the London headquarters for the new station-master to sign. That new functionary failed to look at the matter in a reciprocal spirit, and even intimated that he intended to conduct his own business in his own way. He then took to pacing up and down on the platform, and spending a good deal of time in the waiting-rooms; but, finding that his presence inflicted a great deal of awe upon the porters, he considerably withdrew himself, like Cincinnatus, to his farm, or rather, to speak accurately, to his villa. Here I used to visit the old man, for between him and me a great kindness had sprung up, and some intimacy. We used to have some long talks together; and I am going to put down some portions of that part of the talk which related to his recollection of railway affairs. My friend was a little given to expansion and repetition in his narratives, so that while in some instances I give his words, in others I have taken the liberty of condensing his remarks.

'Some of our people,' said my friend on one occasion, 'find the time very heavy on their hands, as they go up and down with their season tickets. It's all very well in the morning, when they have their papers to read and the news of the day to talk about. I often have to go up in the morning, and I am delighted with them in their talk. There's Squire Wilson, the parliament man. He talks better in the morning after his breakfast, and is a deal fresher, than when, worn out by his day's work, he does so much talking in the House of Commons. Coming back, there are some of our gentlemen who regularly play cards. The time drags heavy, and they have nothing else to do. They are quite gentlemen, some

of those who do it, and they will either play for nothing, or it will make no odds to them if they lose a little.

'There were many of our gentlemen in my time who made quite a club in the train as they went to and from the big town. They used to take the same train morning and evening, and, as far as possible, the very same seats. They did not look at all well pleased if any gentleman who was a stranger got in, and in any way interfered with their comfort. There was one old gentleman who used regularly to keep a flask underneath his cushion, and have a few sandwiches in the carriage-pocket, in case he should happen to get hungry. I used to be on the look-out, I assure you, and took care that strangers interfered with them as little as possible.

'But, as I was going to say, there are often sharpers and cheaters of cards about; and there are some folk in particular whom we know very well, and have to keep a sharp eye on. Railway robbery is quite a profession, sir, and is mainly in the hands of a few gifted individuals. The worst of it is that mere boys have taken to play at cards on their journeying. They live in country places with their relations, and go up to the big town to their offices or wherever their place may be. And, of course, they are too much of men not to play for money like their betters.'

'There was young Montagu,' I said, recalling a well-known case which had caused a good deal of scandal in our neighbourhood. 'He embezzled, and I am not quite sure that he did not commit forgery; and I believe that railway gambling was at the bottom of it all.'

'That was so, sir. But, bless your heart, he never committed

forgery. That's what kind people charitably put on. Embezzlement's bad enough. It's a good job his friends shipped him off to Australia, and saved him from the police. I have no doubt he will come home and pay that back, or maybe his family have done that already.

'The worst of it is,' he went on to say, that there is sometimes a good deal of drunkenness and quarrelling in a railway-carriage when gambling is going on. I have known several instances where a man has put his fist through a pane of glass, and always with very serious results. I have known several persons nearly die from the loss of blood in this way, before they could get the help of any surgeon. There was that murder on the Brighton line some time ago. I have no doubt the railway servant at Balcombe saw the two men fighting in the first-class carriage. But who was to suppose that there was murder going on? I have frequently seen fighting going on, but at the worst there has only been a bruised head, or a hand and wrist cut about by the glass, which, as I have said, may be bad enough. People have been very nervous since that Balcombe murder. Few people go through the tunnel without thinking and talking about it. It has been rather a bad thing for the railway people. Many ladies who used to go first-class now go third, that they may be in a compartment where there are plenty of people. If in a first or second class carriage there is only a single person, and every person entering the carriage seems to think that this person is repulsive-looking, the lady, or it may be a gentleman even, will draw back, and ask to be shown into a carriage where there are plenty of people. Why, Mr. Jones, our lawyer, a most

respectable man, but not good-looking, has several times been taken for a murderer; and ladies have refused to go into the same carriage with him.

'Once a set of drunken sailors, for a lark, took first-class tickets, and distributed themselves over a whole compartment, much to the annoyance of the other passengers; but I made them all get out and go third-class. But there may be even worse companions than these. A lady that you and I know, sir, travelled in the same railway-carriage with another who had had scarlet fever, and caught it, and was near at death's door. I am afraid that there is a great deal more mischief done in this way than many persons think, and this is an injury for which they can't recover damages from the railway company.'

It was very singular, he told me, how even the youngest children would take vehemently to the life of the railway. It is as much a passion with boys to belong to the line as ever it was to go to sea or to become a soldier. It is sometimes quite difficult to keep the little rascals away from the sheds and from meddling with the engines. The old hands say that there is a peculiar light in a boy's eye that tells them when a child is quite mad upon a railway life. All children in the neighbourhood of railway-stations come to be able to interpret every sound and every light. I have even known grown-up men, in my experience, whose great delight it has been to sit day after day for hours in a station watching the trains. A little village boy will think it the highest honour in the world to be of service to an engine-driver; if he is allowed he will do some of his menial work for him. He is sure to egg his way at last to the line.

I spoke to the station-master as to the prospects of such a young fellow when he had entered into the service of the company.

'Now, I myself,' said the station-master, 'have got on very gradually. Bless your heart, anybody may get on, if he will only be steady, and do his duty, and act accordin' to his lights. I had a good character from school and from parson, and I was a newspaper-boy for a time; and afterwards I became a porter, and our Squire, who was one of the directors, took kindly notice of me.'

'And when you were a virtuous porter, what did you do about the tips?'

'Well, sir, those tips always did give me some trouble of mind. I knew well enough that our rules were against the taking of tips. Some of our fellows would act very bad. They were always on the look-out for some old gentleman or a lady in a first-class carriage, and poor women and children and a lot of luggage might be left to themselves. I have seen big fellows just carrying a small hand-bag for a gent, while there were poor people just going distracted, not knowing what train to take or how to gather up their packages. No, sir, I always tried to do my duty. Those fellows who thought of nothing but tips generally spent them in a public-house, and seldom rose to anything in the service. I don't mean to say that I never took any. That would be too much for human nature. I never put myself particularly in the way of getting them, or looked as if I wanted them, or was sullen if I got nothing. But, bless your heart, sir, there are people who quite force their money upon you, and would think you impertinent if you didn't take it. If I put a gentleman into a cab, or take his

things to the cloak-room, there's no call for him to pay me. But, bless your heart, sir, there's some folks that give a deal of trouble. I have had to turn nurserymaid to a lot of children, and to look after ever so many packages for hours together, which folk were too mean or too forgetful to put into the parcels-offices or the cloak-room.

'I think in those cases no one could object to my taking a tip. Of course it would be a great deal better if the company would let us take money now and then; but now we have to fight it out with our own consciences, as best we may—not that that is much trouble to most of us. If gentlefolk wished to help and reward the railway servants, they could do no better than put money into the boxes that are provided for the railway servants. There's a frightful lot of accidents that happens on the line. I daresay that five-sixths of all the accidents happen to the railway servants. The men raised a sort of insurance fund among themselves, and on some lines it is made an absolute condition that the men should subscribe to the funds. I am bound to say that our company has always been particularly good to men who have had accidents. There was one poor fellow who ran across the line to save the life of a passenger who was on the point of being knocked down by an express, and who would certainly have been killed; he saved the man's life, but he lost his leg. The people in the village raised a subscription for him. I am likewise bound to say,' continued our station-master, with a gratified smile, 'that they are always ready to do anything of that sort. And the company gave him a first-rate wooden leg, which is always an expensive thing to buy; and when

he was well put him in charge of a gate, which came easy to him. Not,' continued the station-master, 'that the charge of a gate is always so easy. I had one myself before I had charge of this here station, and it seems a deal the more troublesome of the two.'

I expressed my surprise to hear this.

'It was the Covent Garden carts that broke my rest so. They would come up as early as two or three in the morning, and after that hour, as soon as ever I began my forty winks, there was sure to be one to disturb my rest. There was one market-cart that I did not mind at all. There was a wonderful gentleman, a counsellor-at-law, who used to plead at the assizes, and he was great friends with the big Squire who lived in those parts, and precious junketings they used to keep up till two or three o'clock in the morning. Now, it was of great importance to this jocosse gentleman that he should be in town early in the morning; and it was a cross-country sort of place, where you could not easily find a train to suit, even supposing that the gentleman could trust himself to get up in time. So he made an agreement with a market-gardener, who used to pass my gate between two and three in the morning, to pick him up at the Squire's and land him quite safe at the market. He used to sleep as cool and comfortable as possible among the cabbages; but if he was awake when he passed through our gate he always used to fling me a handsome tip if he had it about him. The gardener that drove that cart told me that when the gentleman came to town he used to pick himself up as cool as anything, take a cup of coffee at a stall, go off to his chambers, and be as fresh as a daisy all the morning,

when he would get on famously with his work.'

He went on to explain the different gradations of employment on the line. A man began as a porter; by and by he was made one of the railway police; if he behaved well he might get to some other office; he might become an inspector of luggage-trains or cattle-trains; he might become the station-master of a small and then of a larger station. Similarly he explained to me the system of promotion in the engine-driving department of the line. A man generally begins as a cleaner, then he becomes a fireman, and afterwards a regular engine-driver. There is a long drilling before a man becomes fit for what is called the foot-plate life. Indeed, many of them never become fit for it; for there are countless opportunities for committing blunders, and a man who commits blunders is never fit for the work. The driver of a locomotive ought to understand from science and experience all about his locomotive. He should know all about his engine, just as a driver or rider should properly understand the temper of his horse. He begins with belonging to a class of engine-men who are called the 'relievers.' In reality they have no engine of their own, but they take charge of the engines from the drivers who have come from the main line. His first work is generally on a pilot-engine, where he can't do much harm to any other person but himself. A man learns to drive a goods-train before he is intrusted with a passenger-train; but it is generally five or seven years before he gets this promotion, and then it is on a slow train; he is then promoted to a fast passenger-train, and then to an express. There are three things to which a good engine-driver has to

look: first, the condition of his fire, which ought to be burning well before starting; a thorough taking stock and examination of his engine before starting; and then a constant look-out for signals. The slightest mistake in overlooking the little red light, or, indeed, in not noticing any incidental signals, may wreck a train and ruin a driver.

It is interesting to see how the men come to know each other, and gradually make friends. A fellow may come a hundred miles from the south, and meet another who comes hundreds of miles from the north; they only see each other for a very little while, and then they become friends. Very often a guard or engine-driver picks up an acquaintance with a pretty girl at a railway-station, and somehow they contrive to become friends and to marry. You will find that whole families run after the railway business, just as some will go sailing and soldiering, or any other line of life.

'It's a fine education that all our railway-men get. They are trained to take the most accurate notice of everything. There would be a great many more robberies at railway-stations, if the men did not notice everything and everybody. If any suspicious character gets into the train, if there is anything that looks like an assignation, if there is any property that looks like stolen goods or might be dangerous explosives, we are on the look-out for them all the time, I can assure you. I flatter myself we railway-people cut a very respectable figure in the witness-box.

'Every man is bound to look very carefully to facts. He must notice everything which he is bound to take notice of.'

'That is the first lesson in all science, Mr. Station-master. No

man ever gets on unless he is true to facts. Truth, observation, accuracy, are fine things all over the world, and speak as much for a man's character as for his 'cuteness.'

'The least bit of carelessness might cost any amount of life and money on the railway. It is the duty of an engineer to take notice of everything that is put up on the notice-board, which is expressly meant for his instruction. We call the notice-board the bulletin. Now, in one case, if a man had chosen to look, he would have seen that there had been a flood in the neighbourhood, and that a certain bridge was in an unsafe condition. The stupid fellow took no notice, and the train was wrecked on the bridge. It was the Tay Bridge disaster, only on a smaller scale. It might all have been avoided by the exercise of a little common sense.

'I remember the time,' said the station-master, 'when we had only a single line of rail. And, talking of accidents, the most terrible accident of all might have happened here. It was before my time, but we still talk of it at the office. I don't know whose mistake it was, but there was a mistake of a most terrible sort. The up-train was wrongly started. The station-master two stations off had, I believe, committed some great oversight. The result was that there were two trains on the same line in opposite directions, that would meet presently. The result of such a collision must be most dreadful. There would be an immense loss of life, destruction of property, and frightful damages to be paid by the railway company. Now, all this was prevented by the cleverness of a little child. She was one of those children who are always hanging about the line and watching the working of it,

and understood all the details. The little girl had more wit than the station-master, and found out that something was wrong. She climbed up a parapet of a bridge, and waved her handkerchief and gesticulated wildly to the driver of the approaching train. That driver was a sharp fellow. He might have fancied that it was only child's play, but he had the gumption to see that there was something wrong. He backed his engine just in time. Three minutes more and there would have been one of the most frightful railway accidents ever known in this country. It is supposed that that mere child saved the company ten thousand pounds, besides saving ever so many human lives.'

'I hope the company did something very handsome by her.'

'Well, sir, I can't say they did. The railway companies are not over liberal. They made her, sir, a present of five shillings. They also said something about sending her to school, but they never did so. However, the Almighty did something better for her. She was a sweet little thing, too good for this world, and He sent her a short illness, and took her to Himself.'

This led the talk to accidents, of which our worthy station-master had a great deal to say.

'There's many accidents, sir, that happen of which the public hear nothing at all, and a great many accidents that are not accidents, but are just shaved off by the merest fluke. There was an old gentleman, sir, who lived in the red house, where the Marches live now, not far from your own place. He was a very thoughtful old gentleman, and used to wander about with one hand behind his back, and the other holding up a book to his face. He used to talk to himself a little, and some peo-

ple said he was deranged, but it was only because he was a bit of a philosopher. He was rather deaf, however, which turned out to be as bad as anything else could be for him. One day he was mooning along the line in a fit of absence of mind. He had no business to be doing that. He ought to have crossed as soon as he could, but, instead of that, he walked leisurely along between the rails, thinking of his philosophy. He was too deaf to hear anything of the train coming up behind him as hard and fast as death. Fortunately for him—though I don't know that it was so very fortunate for him in the long-run—the engine had what we call a cow-catcher. It caught the old gentleman just about the middle, and threw him clear up into the boughs of a tree that grew by the side of the line. Very much astonished that old gentleman was when he found himself among the boughs of the tree. He did not have any actual injury from his fall, but his nervous system was much shaken. He went away at first for a short visit, and afterwards for good; and I have since heard that he is dead. His friends tried to get damages; but of course it was no use, as he had no business to be straying on the line after that fashion. Accidents hereabout are what companies are particularly afraid of, as juries in our part of the country, if they can find the least excuse, always make a rule of giving swinging damages. There have been some people to whom the railway accident has been the best thing that ever happened to them. I knew a poor young man, who lived with his widowed mother, and was too poor to go to college. He was in a railway accident, and the company paid him five hundred pounds, and they sent him to college, and

made a gentleman and a scholar of him; and now he has married a fine lady, and is very comfortable somewhere. I knew a tradesman who was going down-hill, and was sadly in want of a little capital. He got a very handsome compensation, and it quite set him up in the world. He was dreadfully shaken, to be sure, and paid very hard for his money; but I think that, upon the whole, he did not mind the shaking for the money, and would be willing perhaps to take the shaking over again for the same amount of money. Most people who deserve compensation get compensation, and to some of them no amount of money would be too much compensation. But there is a great amount of sham accidents, and some people get money who have no right, and if they are found out they deserve all they get.

'There was a very bad accident at a station not far from here. It was a little byway station on a sharp curve of the line. The curve was so sharp that you could hardly see a few dozen yards before a train would be down upon you. It was a very foolish spot to put a station at. People used to say that it was only a matter of time, and there was sure to be an accident. That old gentleman the philosopher, of whom I spoke to you, used to say that there were bound to be so many accidents in the course of the year. He used to call it the law of averages. He said that if the number fell short by Christmas Day, there would sure to be enough accidents between that and the New Year to fill up the proper number; and if there was to be an accident, this, he said, was the exact spot where it was bound to come off. Sure enough a poor fellow was run over by an express. The jury

gave immense damages to the widow and children.

'Did you ever hear any story of a runaway engine, sir? We have some very curious stories of that sort on the line, sir—one in particular. It caused a dreadful accident, and it will never be forgotten. You may read all about it in one of Mr. Reynolds' books. An engine-driver, going to his shed, missed the engine which it was his turn to serve. How the engine could possibly have disappeared was a perfect mystery. It afterwards turned out that some young lad had been playing with the machinery; and when he heard of what had happened he ran away clear out of that part of the country. The engine, without any driver, dashed down the main line at the rate of sixty miles an hour. The only thing that could possibly stop her was to lay a sleeper on the line. They telegraphed to a station to say that there was a runaway engine, and that they must stop it at once. The answer came back that it was too late—that it had passed their station, and was bound to run into an excursion train that was in front. It was a dreadful business, sir. There was a lot of honest country folk that were taking a day's pleasure. That runaway engine killed seven people and badly wounded thirty or forty more, besides that shock of the crash which upsets people more than anything else.

'Perhaps the greatest thing of all that we had was about the Queen's journey. I have heard tell that that journey costs her Majesty about two thousand pounds each time. Nearly every man employed upon the line has a printed paper telling him all about it. The best engine-driver that we have drives the train; and some of our biggest people, the manager

and the superintendent of the line, go on the foot-plate. She only stops an hour all the way to Scotland—half an hour in one place, and a quarter of an hour in two others; and then the speed is about forty miles an hour, sleeping on the way. A pilot-engine goes first, a quarter of an hour ahead, to clear the way, and see everything safe.

'It would be the most terrible thing in the world if ever anything was to happen to the royal train. The Queen comes punctual and starts quick. Everything has been got in readiness hours before. It is the greatest event of the time when the Queen makes the journey to Balmoral. Everybody's proud to have anything to do with that journey; and I expect that now and then, when some railway-station is very crowded, the driver slackens, just to let the people get a sight of the Queen's face, and then they make it up afterwards. For the most part, I am afraid that those who say they see her make a mistake, and only fancy so. Bless her heart, she's always sorry when there's a railway accident! We all know that.

'And the funniest remark of all that I have heard about the railway is one that our parson made one day. "You see, station-master," he said, pointing to an engine that was just taken from the train to its shed, "you and I are just like the engine. We get on by means of the combustion of fuel and of liquid. Life is steam. The engine-driver is the soul. When the engine is run down and the fire damped, the forces of life are still all around us, and the soul lives on." It seems to me that there was mostly something in that. And when we come to argue out the matter, it seems likelier still. What do you think, sir?

STORIES OF PICTURES IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

GIORGIONE.

(With a Portrait.)

JOHN EVELYN, in his invaluable *Diary*, records that on the night of the 10th of April 1691, 'a sudden and terrible fire burned down all the buildings over the stone-gallery at Whitehall to the water-side, beginning at the apartments of the late Duchess of Portsmouth (which had been pulled down and rebuilt no less than three times to please her), and consuming other lodgings of such lewd creatures, who debauched both King Charles II. and others, and were his destruction.'

It was possibly the disgust inspired by the reminiscences of this loyal subject and loyal gentleman, as associated with Whitehall, that caused him to dismiss a greater and more historic conflagration with a lurid laconism: '1698, January 5th, Whitehall burnt; nothing but walls and ruins left.' Contemporary pens, other than Evelyn's, were, however, more or less diffuse in their particulars of so irreparable a disaster; and the newspapers of the period, *The Post Man*, *The Post Boy*, and *The London Gazette*, varied in the copiousness of their tears upon the occasion. The late Lord Macaulay, with that wonderful power of graphic condensation which was counted to him for genius, has formulated, in a manner nearly as lively as his best, the aggregate sorrow and misfortune of the nation for 'the destruction of the most celebrated

palace in which the sovereigns of England have ever dwelt. On the evening of the 4th of January, a woman—the patriotic journalists and pamphleteers of that time did not fail to note that she was a Dutchwoman—who was employed as a laundress at Whitehall lighted a charcoal fire in her room, and placed some linen round it. The linen caught fire, and burned furiously. The tapestry, the bedding, the waincots, were soon in a blaze. The unhappy woman who had done the mischief perished. Soon the flames burst out of the windows. All Westminster, all the Strand, all the river were in commotion. Before midnight the King's apartments, the Queen's apartments, the wardrobe, the Treasury, the office of the Privy Council, the office of the Secretary of State, had been destroyed. The two chapels perished together; that ancient chapel where Wolsey had heard mass in the midst of gorgeous copes, golden candlesticks, and jewelled crosses, and that modern edifice which had been erected for the devotions of James, and had been embellished by the pencil of Verrio and the chisel of Gibbons. Meanwhile, a great extent of building had been blown up; and it was hoped that by this expedient a stop had been put to the conflagration. But early in the morning a new fire broke out of the heaps of combustible matter which the gunpowder had scat-

tered to right and left. The guard-room was consumed. No trace was left of the celebrated gallery which had witnessed so many balls and pageants, in which so many maids-of-honour had listened too easily to the vows and flatteries of gallants, and in which so many bags of gold had changed masters at the hazard-table. During some time men despaired of the banqueting-house. The flames broke in on the south of that beautiful hall, and were with great difficulty extinguished by the exertions of the Guards, to whom Cutta, mindful of his honourable nickname of the Salamander, set as good an example in this night of terror as he had set in the breach at Namur. Many lives were lost, and many grievous wounds were inflicted by the falling masses of stone and timber, before the fire was effectually subdued. When day broke, the heaps of smoking ruins spread from Scotland-yard to the bowling-green, where the mansion of the Duke of Buccleuch now stands. The banqueting-house was safe; but the graceful columns and festoons, designed by Inigo, were so much defaced and blackened that their form could hardly be discerned. There had been time to move the most valuable effects which were movable. Unfortunately, some of Holbein's finest pictures were painted on the walls, and are, consequently, known to us only by copies and engravings. The books of the Treasury and of the Privy Council were rescued, and are still preserved. The Ministers whose offices had been burned down were provided with new offices in the neighbourhood. Henry VIII. had built, close to St. James's Park, two appendages to the Palace of Whitehall, a cock-pit and a tennis-court. The Treasury now occupies the site of the

cock-pit, the Privy Council Office the site of the tennis-court.'

Macaulay's allusion to the destruction of 'some of Holbein's finest pictures' is a remarkable and, perhaps, characteristic understatement of the irretrievable loss inflicted upon our national art possessions by the fire in question—an understatement which we are tempted to compare with an entry in the *Diary* of the great Samuel Pepys, under the date April 13th, 1666: 'To Mr. Hales's, where he and I presently resolved on going to White Hall, to spend an hour in the galleries there, among the pictures; and we did so, to my extraordinary satisfaction, he showing me the difference in the paintings, and I do not find so many good things as I thought there was.'

The dispersed pictures and sculptures of Charles I. had been largely re-collected and increased in number by his sons, Charles II. and James II., till the royal galleries were occupied with over twelve hundred paintings, besides more than a hundred specimens of the fictile genius of man in metal, marble, and terra-cotta. These treasures were distributed among the palaces of Windsor, Hampton Court, St. James's, and Whitehall. In the last-named alone, which was still the principal gallery, no less than 738 pictures had been accumulated, many of which were by the most eminent masters. Amongst these the fire of January 4th, 1698, made fearful havoc. Of the three by Leonardo da Vinci, three by Raphael, twelve by Giulio Romano, eighteen by Titian, six by Palma Vecchio, six by Correggio, seven by Parmigiano, twenty-seven by Holbein, four by Rubens, thirteen by Vandyck, fourteen by William Van de Velde, and of which a very considerable part

were evidently genuine, the greater portion were destroyed.

What is more pertinent to our present purpose is that the destruction included eighteen pictures by Giorgione; and the dearth of his productions thus occasioned in this country has never been, and, indeed, can never be, adequately supplied. A quarter of a century ago the sweeping assertion was uttered, with every assumption of prestige and authority, that 'our national and public galleries possess no adequate—scarcely a genuine—example of this great painter.'

Thus an alarming proportion of the works which ambitiously pose before British eyes under the name of Giorgione are admitted doubtfully to the honour of being his handiwork; and experts, with scant regard to the outraged feelings of sanguine proprietors, refer too many of their reputed Giorgiones to Dosso Dossi, Paris Bordone, Francesco Domenici, Pordenone, Pietro della Vecchia, Vincenzo Catena, and other artists and followers of the schools of Venice and Ferrara. This process of repudiation, however, is not without its *per contra* aspect of compensation and recovery; and the same authorities who challenge and exclude on the one hand, on the other claim back again for Giorgione works which have for many lustres past been affiliated to Bonifazio, Giulio Romano, and Titian.

The admittedly genuine works of Giorgione include specimens belonging to the Dukes of Devonshire and Sutherland, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Earl of Malmesbury, and other noble and distinguished owners in various parts of Great Britain. They comprise a splendid unfinished picture of 'The Judgment of Solomon,' with the figures the

size of life, from the Marescalchi collection in Bologna. The delicate feeling for style evinced in the balance of this composition demonstrates the possession on the part of the artist of genius of a quality which fitted him for the highest conception and achievement. Dr. Waagen expresses his opinion that the freedom of the motives and the development of forms point to his period, and has 'no doubt that the completion of this picture was hindered by his early death. The very circumstance, however, of its being unfinished renders the picture on technical grounds the more interesting. The general effect is already, it is true, harmonious, but almost throughout subdued.' Another biblical composition, also presumably belonging to the later period of the master, is a small picture from the collection of the Duke of Litta, and representing the 'Adoration of the Shepherds;' and it is of a very special and singular value, as exemplifying the rarity of an inscribed picture, 'Georgius Barbarellis,' by Giorgione. Amongst his classical or other secular subjects occurs 'The Judgment of Paris,' in which the fastidious shepherd of Mount Ida is delineated in the Venetian costume, with red jacket and white nether garments, resting beneath a tree, with a dog at his feet. The goddesses, whose flesh-tones are of the warmest gold, are completely undraped, compactly grouped, and expectant; and the whole picture is especially striking for the delicately-balanced masses of light in the different planes of distance. His sense of the chivalrous is shown in a small picture, full of glow and colour, of a horseman in a landscape—and again, of a knight and his lady-love, in a highly poetical landscape, in which the dark-blue

sea and the glowing evening sky form a most fascinating and striking contrast, the sky especially being of wonderful beauty. Finally, his sense of the pastoral and homely is exemplified by a shepherd in a sheepskin, with his staff. The figure in this picture, which belongs to the Marquis of Lansdowne, is the more attractive and significant because it is evidently intended by Giorgione to represent himself, the proof of which is to be found in his portrait in the gallery at Munich, as well as in the well-known engraving. Several drawings of Giorgione are also extant in this country—notably at Chatsworth and the British Museum—the genuineness of which is verified at once by their spirit, composition, and execution.

The life of Giorgione, who occupied in the Venetian School the same position as Leonardo da Vinci in the Florentine, was a short one, and the period of his artistic activity was necessarily shorter still. He was not so much productive as formative, attractive of followers and imitators; and although, technically speaking, having few or no direct pupils, he influenced not only his successors, but even his own master, and other of his elder and his younger contemporaries, including his fellow-student Titian, before whose achievements during a career of nearly a century those of Giorgione, who lived little more than a third of that time, fall off from rivalry, whether they are referred to the crude canon of mere number, or to that of full maturity and supreme mastery of power.

Giorgio Barbarelli, commonly known by his *sobriquet* of Giorgione, conferred upon him for the grandeur of his person and his soul, '*per certa grandiosità sua di persona e d'animo*'—'stout

George they called him, so goodly a boy he was—Giorgione,' as Mr. Ruskin says, was 'born half-way between the mountains and the sea.' This event, which is ordinarily stated to have taken place in 1477 or 1478 at Castelfranco, is alternatively and perhaps more precisely described as having occurred at Veduggio, a village in the *contado* or county of Castelfranco, and the territory of Trevigi or Treviso. He was of humble origin, but his father was liberal enough to dedicate him early to art, and placed him at Venice in the school of Giovanni Bellini. Here it was that Titian, of whom it is doubtful whether he was exactly the contemporary of Giorgione or three years his junior, presently became his fellow-student.

Bellini had, to a great extent, the secret of a rich glowing depth of colour, which he did not fail to impart to his distinguished pupils, who so wonderfully improved upon it; and he is credited with being the first of his countrymen who attempted, by a contemplation of the simple effects of Nature, in some degree to reform the dry and Gothic style which, in his time, prevailed in the schools. His design, however, still partook of the stiffness and formality of the current fashion; and, as compared with Giorgione, Bellini may be said to have moved in fetters, even in the direction of liberty. It is something more, therefore, than a difference in degree and development, as exemplified by Giorgione, which has won for the latter the reputation of having taken the first step towards the complete emancipation of Venetian art from the trammels of tradition and monkish convention; and, further, of having been the first artist in whose works landscape is treated

with genuine poetic feeling. Even whilst yet *in statu pupillari* he dismissed the minuteness which enchained Bellini; and he and Titian, becoming the masters of their master, stimulated by their works to even nobler exertions the later genius of Bellini.

For bonds and limitation Giorgione substituted that freedom, 'that disdainful superiority of handling,' as it has been happily called, which, if it be not the result of manner, is the final attainment of execution. Ample outlines, bold fore-shortening, dignity, and vivacity of aspect and attitude, breadth of drapery, richness of accompaniment, more natural and softer passages from tint to tint, and forcible effects of *chiaroscuro*, marked the style of Giorgione. This last, the great want of the Venetian School, had indeed already been discovered to Upper Italy by Leonardo da Vinci, from whom, or rather from certain pictures and drawings of his, Vasari and others pretend that Giorgione derives his *chiaroscuro*. If this view be correct it carries with it the proposition that the true master of Giorgione was Leonardo da Vinci; but it is combated on grounds so reasonable as to be worth the stating. Neither the lines and forms, it is said, peculiar to Da Vinci, nor his system of light and shade, seem to countenance this assertion. 'Gracility and amenity of aspect characterise the lines and fancy of Leonardo; fulness, roundness, those of Giorgione. Fond of a much wider diffusion of shades, and gradually diminishing their mass, the Tuscan drives light to a single point of dazzling splendour. Not so the Venetian, more open, less dark, neither brown nor ferrugineous in his demi-tints, but transparent and true; to tell the whole, he is nearer to Correggio.

He may, however, have inspected and profited by the example of Leonardo, the inventor of *chiaroscuro*; but so as Correggio did by the fore-shortening of Mantegna.'

Vasari tells us that in his youth Giorgione painted, in Venice, many very beautiful pictures of the Virgin, with numerous portraits from Nature, which are most lifelike and beautiful, and which were presently dispersed, in fulfilment of their purpose in being executed, through various parts of Italy. In praise of these Vasari exhausts the language of commendation, and endeavours to eke out the poverty of his vocabulary by suggesting something beyond the reach of the imagination. They are 'of extraordinary beauty,' 'as beautiful as imagination can portray,' 'it is not possible to imagine heads more admirably depicted,' 'of extraordinary merit, so that it is impossible to imagine a more beautiful picture.' The powers of Giorgione, indeed, were peculiarly adapted for portrait-painting, his examples of which present every excellence that mind, air, dignity, truth, freshness, and contrast can confer. Amongst them are the portraits of Leonardo Loredano, painted at the time when he was Doge of Venice; of Giovanni Borgherini of Florence, taken when he was still a youth and living in Venice; of Consalvo Ferrante, taken when that great captain was on a visit to the Doge, Agostino Barbarigo; of a German of the Fugger family, who was one of the principal merchants then trading in Venice, and had his abode at the Fondaco, or Cloth Magazine of the Germans—Fondaco de' Tedeschi, or Hall of Exchange of the German merchants in Venice; and of Caterina Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus.

The art of colour, in which Giorgione discovered himself to be so masterful, is one of the proudest functions and faculties of the painter, if not in some respects the ultimate one. 'To colour perfectly,' says Mr. Ruskin, 'is the rarest and most precious (technical) power an artist can possess. There have been only seven supreme colourists among the true painters whose works exist, namely, Giorgione, Titian, Veronese, Tintoret, Correggio, Reynolds, and Turner; but the names of great designers, including sculptors, architects, and metal-workers, are multitudinous.' It is in the same connection that Mr. Ruskin observes: 'If these men' (the Venetian painters) 'laid architecture little under contribution to their own art, they made their own art a glorious gift to architecture, and the walls of Venice, which before, I believe, had received colour only in arabesque patterns, were lighted with human life by Giorgione, Titian, Tintoret, and Veronese. Of the works of Tintoret and Titian nothing now, I believe, remains; two figures of Giorgione's are still traceable on the Fondaco de' Tedeschi, one of which, singularly uninjured, is seen from far above and below the Rialto, flaming like the reflection of a sunset.'

The same enduring splendour has more than once found allusion in our poetic literature; and in the italicised line of the following extract from his poem on Italy, the late Mr. Rogers devotes a note to pointing his otherwise scarcely doubtful suggestion of Giorgione:

'There is a glorious city in the sea;
The sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,
Ebbing and flowing; and the salt seaweed
Clings to the marble of her palaces.
No track of men, no footsteps to and fro
Lead to her gates. The path lies o'er
the sea,
Invisible; and from the land we went,

As to a floating city, steering in,
And gliding up her streets as in a dream,
So smoothly, silently, by many a dome,
Mosque-like, and many a stately portico,
The statues ranged along an azure sky;
By many a pile in more than Eastern
pride,
Of old the residence of merchant-kings;
The fronts of some, though Time had
shattered them
Still glowing with the richest hues of art,
As though the wealth within them had
run o'er.'

Giorgione's skill in fresco-painting was first put forth, it is said, on the front of his own house in the Campo San Silvestro, where the remains of his work are still to be recognised. In 1504 the Fondaco, already mentioned, was consumed by fire; and Giorgione, jointly with Titian, received a commission to paint the exterior of the building which soon after rose from the ashes. Giorgione's part of the adornment consists almost exclusively of allegorical and poetical groups, the key to the intelligence of which seems to have been lost so early as the time of Vasari. Other extant allegories of his are to this day an enigma. 'A more intelligible allegory,' in the words of Mrs. Heaton, 'is "The Tempest" of the Venetian Academy, which doubtless has allusion to the fearful evils which the League of Cambray had brought upon the Republic, and the brave resistance by which they had finally been overcome. The picture represents a wildly-raging sea, upon which a ship filled with demons drives before the storm, inciting its utmost wrath. To oppose these spirits of destruction, the protectors of Venice, St. Mark, St. Nicholas, and St. George, embark in a small boat on the stormy sea, and, by their spiritual power, succeed in stilling the ragings of hell. The demons throw themselves from their fiery ship into the sea, where fabulous sea-monsters ride upon or disappear

into the waves, glowing with the infernal light shed upon them from the infernal vessel. Altogether this is a most powerful conception, and must, when first painted, have had the intensity of a fiery furnace; but it has not, unfortunately, escaped the ravages of time and restoration.

What is generally reputed to be the principal of the oil paintings of Giorgione is a representation of Christ bearing His Cross, whilst He is Himself dragged along by a Jew. This picture, which Pilkington describes as being 'held in veneration,' is more vividly mentioned by Vasari, who records that 'this work was subsequently placed in the Church of S. Rocco, where it is held in the highest veneration by many of the faithful, and even performs miracles, as is frequently seen.'

Giorgione, above all things, is a poet. His conceptions, even of biblical or historical scenes, are never commonplace, but surprise us by the introduction of some unknown and romantic element. They are tinged with the peculiar colour of his mind, as well as with that of his brush, and thus have a mysterious charm that is lacking in Titian, and other masters of the school, who are, for the most part, essentially objective in their style. 'Giorgione,' writes Dr. Wilhelm Lübke, in his *Outlines of the History of Art*, 'displays the same poetical spirit in the composition of any historical scenes, which acquired the character of highly romantic tales under his hand, often with the added charm of a deep mysteriousness in the representation. His poetical bias is seen even in his portraits, which are distinguished by lofty conception and vivid colouring, whereby the mere portrait is raised to a charming and

distinctive genre-picture. This is the case with the superb painting in the Pitti Gallery at Florence, which goes by the name of "The Concert." A priest is playing upon the harpsichord. Behind him is a youth with a stately hat and feather. He turns his head towards another priest, who stands at his side, with a 'cello in one hand, while he lays the other upon the musician's shoulder. The composition of the figures is so replete with historical reality, that a repetition of the same subject, in the Doria Palace in Rome, is naïvely enough entitled "The Portraits of Luther, Melancthon, and Katharine of Bora."'

One of the earlier works of Giorgione was an altar-piece for the principal church of Castelfranco, which it happily still adorns in comparative freshness. It represents an enthroned Madonna and Child, with St. Liberale and St. Francis below, the former of whom is in armour, and is alternatively said to be a counterfeit presentment of the painter himself, or of Matteo Costanzo, a promising young soldier of the Republic, who met with an early death. It is with this picture that the interesting connection between Giorgione and our National Gallery first emerges into observation, for 'The Knight in Armour' in the Trafalgar-square collection is a sketch from the noble young figure of the warrior saint of Castelfranco, the only difference being that in the latter the figure is represented with a helmet on. Waagen describes it as a small full-length figure of St. George, elevated and powerful in face and form, of unusual vigour in the glow of tone, the head being of masterly treatment, and the armour of great force and clearness in the chiaroscuro.

This picture, so precious as being one of those rarities, a genuine Giorgione, was formerly in the possession of Mr. Rogers, the banker-poet, who sang the 'Pleasures of Memory,' and added to the wreaths with which the brow of Italy is garlanded a poem which bears as its sufficient title the name of that peninsula. In accordance with a generous bequest of Mr. Rogers, it became after his death the property of the nation.

A second picture in the National Gallery attributed to Giorgione is ascribed by Dr. Waagen jointly to that artist and his fellow-scholar Vincenzo Catena. The subject is 'The Virgin enthroned, with the Child on her lap. Before her on the ground, in the attitude of adoration, is a warrior. Further back his page with a horse. The peculiar animation and poetry of the invention breathe quite the spirit of Giorgione. Judging also from the glow of colour and energy of treatment, one is inclined to attribute the figure of the warrior and his page to his hand. The expression, however, and light tone of the Virgin and Child, and the style of folds, display so much of Vincenzo Catena that it is probable these portions are by him. It is quite possible that Giorgione may have had occasion to avail himself of Catena's assistance.'

The last picture of Giorgione's which calls for notice, as adorning the walls of the National Gallery, is of very recent acquisition. Attaching to it is something of the romance of production, transmission, and vicissitudes of ownership. It will be enough if we fix our attention upon the stirring interest of its final change of proprietary, which occurred so lately as the 24th of June 1882, up to which time it had been for many

years one of the gems of the celebrated Hamilton Palace collection. Dr. Waagen, who saw this picture at Hamilton Palace, speaks of it, by a singular misnomer, as 'Hippomenes and Atalanta;' whereas its more correct and more generally-adopted title is 'The Story of Myrrha.' He warmly praises it, however, as being, both in conception and glow of colour, true to Giorgione, and of great charm.

'The Story of Myrrha' was celebrated wherever art was known, or the love of the beautiful had penetrated; and the intelligence of its offer for sale on the day just mentioned brought almost unprecedented numbers to Messrs. Christie's sale-rooms. In front of the crowded audience, according to an account given by the leading organ of ephemeral opinion in London, was Mr. Burton, the director of the National Gallery, and in company with him were Mr. G. Howard, M.P., and Mr. Gregory, two of the trustees of that institution. Near to them, however, were to be observed two formidable opponents, as agents expressly commissioned by the director of the Louvre—M. Gauchez and M. Conradsch—who, it is now a matter of congratulation to know, did not prevail against our director in any one instance. Every picture which was desired for the National Gallery was obtained for the same, and at a very moderate expenditure. There was a generous reticence on the part of private and public collectors, as well as of the agents who represented them. There seemed to be a fine contagion of content in foregoing the gratification of individual and comparatively selfish possession, for the sake of securing for the picture a home where it should, by hypothesis, impart the greatest happiness to the greatest number.

The *Times* of Monday, June 26th, 1882, thus describes the incident:

"The Story of Myrrha," by Giorgione, absurdly called by Waagen "Hippomenes and Atalanta," the picture which had created the utmost admiration, and which now belongs to the National Collection, was placed upon the easel with a round of applause, as a tribute to the splendour and beauty of this superb picture, which is painted with all the true *fuoco Giorgionesco*, and is in a marvellously perfect state, after probably more than four hundred years. It is, on panel, 31 inches by 52 inches. The first bid was 300 guineas, and it was soon seen, to the satisfaction of most of the audience, that Mr. Burton was bidding, but not against M. Gauchez; and after a few advances, the picture was knocked down to him at 1417*l.* 10*s.*, a price which is very considerably below even its commercial value; for had it not been known that the National Gallery authorities wished to purchase it, the picture would have been sold for four or five times the sum now paid for it. We heard of one commission to give 5000 guineas being declined by Messrs. Agnew & Sons, because that firm had been informed of the intention of the trustees.'

The dimensions of the painting thus sold and thus acquired are 2 feet 7 inches by 4 feet 4 inches; and the tribute to its genuineness and its condition, included in the price it realised, may be understood by comparing the prices reached by other pictures at the same sale, nominally by Giorgione, but in reality either doubtful originals, or more or less praiseworthy copies or imitations, in a less or more attractive state of preservation. Thus 'Joshua's

Battle,' 55 inches by 91, was knocked down for 15 guineas; 'The Resurrection,' 5 feet 3 inches by 5 feet, for 157*l.* 10*s.*; whilst 530*l.* 5*s.* was realised for a representation, 6 feet 6 inches by 4 feet, of a Venetian General in half-armour and trunk hose, with a sword, and with his right arm resting on a pedestal, on which are his helmet and gauntlet.

There is mystery and sadness about the premature death of Giorgione. Vasari says that, while engaged in labouring to his own honour and that of his country, he was also much in society, and delighted his many friends with his admirable performances in music. At this time he fell in love with a lady, who returned his affection with equal warmth, and they were immeasurably devoted to each other. But in the year 1511 it happened that the lady was attacked by the plague, when Giorgione also, who, like herself, was unaware of the circumstance, and continued his accustomed visits, was smitten with the disease, and that with so much virulence that in a very short time he passed to another life. This event happened in the thirty-fourth year of his age.

Although Venice paid the penalty, in the shape of frequent incursions of the plague, for the splendid prerogative she enjoyed, as described in the noble sonnet of Wordsworth,

'Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee,'

there is no mention of any plague prevailing in the city during the year 1511. Any alternative account, therefore, of the reason or manner of Giorgione's death becomes of interest; and one is supplied by Ridolfi, who says that Giorgione died in despair and broken-hearted at the infidelity of the lady whom Vasari depicts as

a model, if not a marvel, of devotion. The unfaithfulness of the lady in question was embittered to Giorgione by the fact that she had deserted him for his friend and pupil Pietro Luzzo of Feltri, called Zarato or Zarotto, who, in estranging her affections, had aggravated female fickleness by adding to it the ingratitude of a man and a disciple.

There is a disposition on the part of some of the admirers of Giorgione to accommodate the varying versions of his death, in the assertion that he died of the plague, and that the heart-break was only the intensifying and precipitation of a sorrow which clouded the latter part of his life. Even in his gayest subjects those who claim to see it are fain to recognise an underlying element of sadness and mystery—a 'prophecy of sorrow,' Mrs. Jameson calls it—that is very different from the clear defined expression of the enjoyment of human life that we find in Titian and other masters of this school.

The charge of suggesting unhappiness, however, is finely compensated by Mr. Ruskin, who triumphantly fixes as follows the place of Giorgione in the hierarchy

of art by what he calls 'a series sufficiently symbolical of the several ranks of art, from lowest to highest :

'In Wouvermans we have the entirely carnal mind, wholly versed in the material world, and incapable of conceiving any goodness or greatness whatsoever.

'In Angelico you have the entirely spiritual mind, wholly versed in the heavenly world, and incapable of conceiving any wickedness or vileness whatsoever.

'In Salvator you have an awakened conscience, and some spiritual power contending with evil, but conquered by it, and brought into captivity to it.

'In Durer you have a far purer conscience and higher spiritual power, yet with some defect still in intellect, contending with evil, and nobly prevailing over it, yet retaining the marks of the contest, and never so entirely victorious as to conquer sadness.

'In Giorgione you have the same high spiritual power and practical sense, but now, with entirely perfect intellect, contending with evil, conquering it utterly, casting it away for ever, and rising beyond it into magnificence of rest.'

A. H. G.

'GOLDEN GIRLS.'

A Picture-Gallery.

BY ALAN MUIR, AUTHOR OF 'CHILDREN'S CHILDREN,' 'LADY BEAUTY ;
OR CHARMING TO HER LATEST DAY,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE WAY NOVELS SHOULD BE WRITTEN.

THE reader of these memoirs has no doubt more than once remarked to herself that the people here portrayed are of the common sort—not miracles of virtue nor of vice, neither paragons of beauty nor monsters of deformity. Such readers will naturally ask, 'Where in all the world of imagination has this author lived? Why does he not set before us the men of sorrow, reflection, doubt, and sin, with their tragic footsteps through life; the women of loveliness, of amazing goodness, or of equally amazing crime, with whom modern romance has made us familiar? Why have we no fine declamatory speeches of wives to their tyrannical lords, of betrayed lovers to their paramours? No midnight meditations of guilty men? No paroxysms of passion, masculine or feminine, or both? Just close the book, my lady, and listen to me. As to terrible narratives of guilt and sin, I am far from saying that life does not supply these; but the recital of them in vivid and effective forms may be found in the pages of our daily newspapers, where the story has the rare advantage of actual truth combined with good literary faculty in the narrator. For my own part, whenever I want sensation I read old newspapers, and

find abundance; and I invariably remark that criminals are uninteresting people, and, apart from their environment of villany, deadlly dull. For these reasons I have not hitherto ventured to set before you bigamy, arson, murder, or assault. I do not say that an occasional scoundrel, or some rare atrocity, may not be worth describing; only that as yet I have not recorded any such, not wishing to spoil the trade of the newspapers, between whom and myself civil relations exist. Turning now to rare and wonderful characters, miracles of material or moral beauty, these I have not described simply because I have never seen them. I here declare that although I seldom go out for a half-hour's walk without being caught by some flitting face which delights me, and the sight of which adds something to the accumulated pleasure of my life, I have never yet seen a perfect beauty. Here I could chisel a lip more finely, here lower an eyebrow, here give a touch of vermilion with advantage, as it would seem. And yet somehow these faces, pretty and with a fault, are more attractive than perfection would be, more lovable, more human, more womanly. So I am content to paint the daughters of my land as their Maker has fashioned them, nor will I pay them a doubtful compliment by investing them with beauty greater than they

own, which, as it enlaves mankind, is surely enough. Then as to prodigious goodness or greatness of soul, I frankly admit I have not met these, no more than perfect beauty. I have never seen a character without so many flaws, and such perceptible flaws, that no one except a fool would think of calling it grand. Nor do I give much for the narrative of the struggles of over-reflective men towards what is called truth. To be the least amusing it must be unnatural. Greatness of this sort makes much less difference in people's lives than outsiders imagine. I admire my brothers and sisters of the fiction pen who give us all so many happy hours by their pleasant fairy tales, or their creeping horrors, their voyages to the Brobdingnags and Lilliputs of human nature and life. For me and for my readers (who, I may say with modesty, are the entire body of refined and tasteful men and women in the kingdom) the kitchen, the parlour, and the street are enough. In these humble observatories we discover that Sally Badger, while she will kick her husband under the table, will by no means stick him with a dagger; and that Daniel Ruddock, who docks his gardener fourpence a week, does not plan a forgery. The same rule pervades the whole history. Men and women who *exist*—not those we desire, or imagine, or admire in ideal—these are our models. A botanist finds more pleasure in some wayside blossom than in any wonder of the hot-house; an eye trained in colour takes more pleasure in quiet alternations of hue than in the harsh contrasts of a soldier's coat; and my school of disciples is content with reality, modest reality. We neither flood the page with grief nor roar with laughter as we read, but only smile or sigh.

CHAPTER XXXV.

IN WHICH, BEING GREATLY PROVOKED, MR. DANIEL RUDDOCK USES STRONG LANGUAGE.

IN the drawing-room where we first saw them, Daniel Ruddock and his wife were sitting after dinner, she reading a novel, and her husband busy as usual at his accounts. A pocket-book, with well-worn cover and dog-eared corners, contained the figures over which Daniel was poring; but from his anxious face it might have been surmised that many a ponderous ledger held less portentous figures than this unpromising volume. Page after page Daniel turned over, and his working under-lip verified many an inaudible calculation; and at last his brow relaxed, as though a grave examination had ended satisfactorily, and he sank back in his chair.

'Better and better!' he said. 'I grow stronger every year—in pocket, Bee—in pocket. Not in heart and lung. I shall have a fortune some day—if I live, that is—poor sickly devil that I am!'

'You have called yourself that name for many years,' Beatrice remarked good-humouredly. 'And here you are still.'

'Yes, here I am still,' Daniel replied, shaking his head. 'A creaking door, a creaking door!'

'A creaking door, Dan, and a croaking door,' his wife said. 'Creaking and croaking all day, and all night, too!'

There was no ill-nature in the speech, and Daniel smiled.

Older, grayer, feebler, he had become; his shoulders were pointed at each other, and seemed as if they would meet but for the small ragged head that came between; his cheeks were ploughed more deeply by time and weakness; and his hand was

a human claw, bony and black. And the presence of his wife was a foil for his ghastly visage, she being still buxom and handsome, with plenty of healthy blood in her cheeks, and the marks of wealth and ease almost as plain in her white plump arms as in her rich attire. She shut her book, and waited to see if her husband would speak.

'I admire your dress,' Daniel said, regarding her with approval, as he opened his eyes, which he had wearily closed. 'I always say, Bee, that a handsome dress becomes you, and that you become a handsome dress.'

'What will you think of the price, Dan?' she asked, not fearful, it seemed, of her answer. 'What will you think of twenty golden guineas, my impecunious husband?'

'Don't grudge it, Bee, not to you,' Daniel answered; 'I like to see you well dressed. Besides'—he dropped his voice and looked craftily at her—'I knew the price before, and I have arranged for the payment.'

'Really, Daniel!' she said, affecting interest, as well she might, although Beatrice knew that the cost of a dozen dresses could not hurt him. 'How did you arrange that, Dan?'

He began to laugh—harsh raven-like notes—and, as usual, he was seized with a fit of coughing which spoiled his mirth.

'Sickly—sickly devil!' he gasped when a little recovered. 'What business have I to jest or laugh? Standing on the brink of—'

'Don't, Daniel, please!' Mrs. Ruddock called out. 'You are nothing of the kind. What were you going to say? How have you arranged about payments for the dress?'

'You recollect,' Daniel replied,

forgetting his distress in the glee of the subject, 'how some years ago you told me that every week you sent a basket of kitchen-stuff and odds and ends like half-burnt candles and broken meats to old Betty Floyd?'

'Because,' Beatrice said, feeling that some explanation was needed, 'you see, Floyd came by his death in our service.'

'I have nothing to say to that,' Daniel called out harshly. 'How much better would it have been for Floyd if he had been out of work when he died! Never mind that, however. I made an arrangement for the sale of that kitchen-stuff, and week by week—to teach you a lesson in economy, Bee—I put the money in this old ink-bottle. There it has gone on growing for three years, and look now, Bee, look now!'

He rose, and opening a curious sort of folding desk which stood in a corner, took out a great glass ink-bottle and turned the contents on the table. Sovereigns, shillings, pence, and halfpence all rolled out together, and a cloud of dust flew into the air, telling how long the coins had lain undisturbed.

'How much is there?' asked Beatrice curiously.

'Twenty-three pounds nine shillings and twopence,' Daniel answered readily; 'the price of your dress, Bee and a bonnet in. I did this not only to save the money, but to give you all a lesson. Waste not, want not. Save and have. Just stand up and look at your dress in the glass, and then think that it has come out of the baskets of kitchen-stuff that you were throwing away—the dress and a bonnet besides! In fact, Bee,' Daniel continued earnestly, as if the fact touched his feelings, 'you are dressed in kitchen-stuff, if one may

say so. O, it is a great lesson as to what can be done by saving the pence!

It sometimes happens that a preacher makes his hearers smile, while he himself has no suspicion of anything ludicrous. Beatrice could scarcely keep her countenance when she saw how warmly Daniel spoke; and there was besides a shade of momentary irritation and scorn in her face. But she had got the dress, and being a woman of the world, she smiled in approval.

'Besides,' Daniel went on, sitting down again and spreading out his two hands in a demonstrative way, 'we want to save money. You see if your idea of Lucy marrying young Robert Sanctuary ever comes to anything, we shall require—I do not know how much—thousands upon thousands.'

'I am at a loss about that,' Beatrice said thoughtfully. 'I can scarcely make Lucy out; she is a peculiar girl.'

'O, pooh-pooh!' Daniel cried contemptuously; 'peculiar girl! Wait until I tell her the sum I am going to settle on her, and she will marry Robert Sanctuary if he was made of bricks and mortar, which he is not, you know,' Daniel added, not wishing the supposition to affect the young fellow's reputation; 'he is a well put-together young man enough.'

Beatrice shook her head dubiously, but Daniel would not waste another word on that part of the subject.

'There is something far more important to be considered,' he said, 'and to this matter we must really give our minds. You know how ill Jerome was a few weeks ago?'

'Well,' Beatrice said lazily, 'what of that?'

'I do not believe he has made

his will,' Daniel said, nodding his head significantly; 'indeed, I know he has not. Now, Bee, if he should be snatched away without having made his will, what a fearful thing it would be!'

'It would be very provoking,' Beatrice said, looking seriously at her husband, 'after all our trouble.'

'Jerome Dawe is worth sixty thousand pounds if he is worth one silver sixpence,' said Daniel. 'Now supposing he leaves that to us, and supposing further—to stretch a point—that we gave every penny of that sixty thousand as a fortune to Lucy, we should still be as we are to-day! Now that is a very wonderful thought.'

'True—very true,' Beatrice remarked reflectively. 'You are right, Daniel; this must be looked after.'

'Sally may step in,' continued Daniel, cataloguing the possibilities on his fingers, 'or that old hag Matty may get hold of him; he is fool enough to be caught with any hook. Or what would be just as fatal to us, though, perhaps, not so vexatious, he may die without a will; and then, Bee, we should be nowhere at all.'

'It is an awkward matter to speak to him about,' Beatrice said. 'It is so hard to seem—'

'Hard or easy, the thing has to be done,' Daniel said decisively; 'and the sooner the better. Let us go over and see Jerome this morning, and between us—one helping the other out—we must get the thing said. The fortune of the future Lady Sanctuary is at stake.'

Daniel delivered this as one of his jocose strokes; but the face of his wife did not reflect his facetiousness.

'You make nothing of Lucy,' said she, shaking her head; 'but

I assure you, Daniel, I have my fears. Lucy is self-opinionated and wilful, and she certainly does not take kindly to Robert Sanctuary.'

'Never mind,' Daniel replied, still confident; 'she has not taken kindly to anybody else.'

'Are you quite sure?'

'What do you mean?' asked Daniel, in a much more lively tone. 'You do not suspect anything?'

'Daniel,' his wife answered gravely, 'I have suspicions, and more than suspicions; it ought not to be kept from you. I believe that Hector Badger has taken a fancy to Lucy, and that she knows it and encourages it.'

'What!' roared Daniel, aghast, and unable to utter another syllable.

'Yesterday I saw him looking up to her window, and she—'

'What!' roared Daniel again. Then recovering himself, and bursting out in the voice of a ship's officer in a raging storm: 'That idiot—that stammerer—that sheepish jackass!'

'There is something between them,' Beatrice said; 'I have watched them, and it is not all on Hector's side either.'

'But I tell you what it is,' cried Daniel, jumping from his chair, 'I will give the fellow a good kicking, or a sound horsewhipping, or I will speak to the police. No man's house is safe if a great gawky calf can go staring in at his windows and making faces at his daughter! O Master Hector, when I come across you again I will give you something with my fist or my toe, or with my tongue, or with all three—with all three it shall be—and I will cure your love-making! Where are family rights, where are love and duty, if a great shuffling shambling fool can go mooning in at a

man's windows in that way? I declare,' cried Daniel, raging more wildly, 'if I had you here, my boy, under my fist, I would make your face more like a pudding than ever—you impudent, pushing, flat-faced ass!'

'Well, Daniel,' his wife said, fearing he might fret himself into a fit, 'the thing has not gone far yet.'

He did not hear her. His fury drove him up and down the room, pouring out reproaches, or half choking himself with efforts to be sarcastic.

'Walk in, Mr. Hector Badger, if you will be so good. Where will you hang your hat, my good sir? Please to wipe your boots on the new mat; don't consider the expense; you must be treated like a nobleman. Will you sit out of the draught, sir, and near the fire? and will you kindly partake of our humble dinner, and sip a bottle or two of our finest claret at seventy-two?'

Here all at once Daniel dashed out of his allegory like a train out of a tunnel, and faced fact again with a roar.

'O, was there ever—was there ever on this earth such a great stumbling, stammering, lumping, lumbering jolterhead, with a mouth that would take in a shovel, and a tongue too big for the mouth, and great eyes like the face of a kitchen clock! O, that I had you here, my boy! and if I could do nothing else, hang me but I would dance on you!'

'It is very provoking, Dan,' his wife said, alarmed at his violence, and wishing to turn the conversation; 'but no harm is done. Leave the thing to me. And now, Daniel, look, it is time for us to start and see Jerome.'

Although Daniel attended to this admonition, and made ready

to start, he could not forget what he had just heard, nor could he all at once repress his rage, which went muttering on, like retreating thunder. An occasional ejaculation burst from his lips, but he uttered not one audible syllable beside until himself and his wife were walking up Jerome Dawe's gravel path.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

IN WHICH MRS. MARTHA SPRING
DRAWS A LONG BOW, TAKES A
GOOD AIM, AND HITS THE GOLD.

It had been an eventful day for Jerome Dawe. He had lately been suffering from a severe pleuritic attack, and his life had been in danger. At this suggestive period crafty Daniel Ruddock wormed out a secret which he had before suspected—that in spite of many promises and hints the great Dawe had not yet made his will. Hereupon Daniel, in his artless way, managed to hint suggestively to Martha Spring that her master would in all probability die intestate. Martha grew livid at the intelligence, and delivered herself upon the subject of the deceitfulness of man with a vehemence which satisfied Daniel that his little plan would work. Martha, however, fearing to seem interested, and wishing rather to put one of the enemy in that questionable position, informed Mrs. Badger that her master had made no will. Martha knew well enough that of Daniel Ruddock she could not make a tool, so she did not take the trouble to confide in him; but from Sally's dashing and military character she hoped great things. She was disappointed. Mrs. Badger visited her uncle day by day, but did not mention his affairs. The lawyer was never summoned; and

had Jerome Dawe died at this time all the fortune-hunters would have been most miserably disappointed. Now that Mr. Dawe was better, Martha resolved to speak for herself, and she came to this resolution on the same day that Daniel decided that he must take some steps. And, curiously enough, Sally Badger that very morning looking at Mildred Walsingham, and feeling that soon she must lose the Golden Girls and their handsome allowance, thought that she would speak to her uncle openly about the disposition of his property. So the day began with cheerful prospects for our redoubtable Jerome.

'You was dreadful bad, sir,' Matty said that morning, as she made some feint of mending the fire in his breakfast-room. 'O, you was *dreadful* bad!'

'Dreadful bad, was I, Matty?' Jerome said, not altogether ill-pleased to hear of his danger now that it was over. 'Well—perhaps I was. Tell me now, Matty; did I seem afraid, or did I face the thing like a man?'

'Like a man! Like ten men!' replied Martha, glad of a chance of flattery. 'Like a regyment! Such courage I never saw. Afraid! No, not a bit. No more—' she continued, losing her point a little—'no more than if you had been walking into a lion's mouth.'

'Quite right, Matty,' Jerome Dawe said, drawing himself up. 'Never be afraid of anything. Now are you quite sure I was not afraid? Was there no changing colour—no groaning? Was all firmness? Was it so, Matty? You were with me all the time, and you must know.'

'I tell you,' Martha repeated, 'the like of you I never saw; you was as cool as if you was just putting on your gloves to walk down the street.'

'And I realised my danger, did I? Jerome went on, resolved to make out his whole case for courage. 'I knew it was just a question of which scale the next feather was dropped into! My mind was clear, was it, Matty?'

'Clear!' Matty ejaculated, in a kind of scream of confirmation. 'I never saw such clearness in all my life. As clear as a winder that has been just cleaned. There, now I have burnt my finger with one of them coals! Drat you, when I tried you with a bit of firewood you was dead out! Clear! Why, sir, you saw everything and knew everything that was going on—either side of the door, it did not matter. There was no keeping anything from you.'

'And not afraid, after all,' Jerome said again, in a satisfied tone. 'Not a bit afraid?'

'No; you seemed to like it,' Martha replied. Then, putting one hand to her heart, she applied herself to her own business.

'But, sir, it was—O, it *was* a hard three weeks for them that loved you—the hardest three weeks them that love you ever spent.' Here Matty rubbed her left eye.

'Who does love me, Matty?' Jerome Dawe said, with a kind of lofty air of despair which might have been learned from Leopardi. 'I should like to know who they are.'

'I ain't sure I know myself,' she replied pensively; 'except your old Matty, for whom you care no more than if she were an old coat.'

'Martha,' Jerome Dawe said, in a sentimental way, 'I must beg you not to speak in that way. How do you know what I think?'

'What's the good o' thoughts?' asked Matty discontentedly. 'Whatever comes o' thoughts? Suppose you had died, where should I have been? Thrust out of doors

—out of the house where I have lived so long and been so happy. What's the good of thoughts, I say, when it would come to that after all?'

'But *would* it have come to that?' asked Jerome Dawe, with a kind of jocose air of mystery which he meant to be very suggestive. 'How do you know it would have come to that?'

Hereupon Martha made ready to fire a shot which she had prepared some time before, and which certainly did not disgrace her cleverness, whatever it may have denoted concerning her conscience.

'Did not I hear what you said that night when you was so feverish and raving? Did I not hear it, and was it not true?'

'What did you hear, Matty?' Jerome Dawe asked, in sudden and very sincere alarm; 'what did I say?'

'Come now, sir,' replied Matty, 'you was wandering, but you cannot have forgotten it altogether—not after speaking so slow and so sensible.'

'Upon my honour,' cried Jerome Dawe, 'I do not remember a word of it.'

'Then you shall hear nothing from me,' said Martha resolutely.

'Yes, I will,' replied Jerome Dawe. 'Everything shall be disclosed.'

'You shall not hear a word from me—not if I went to the stake,' Martha said again. 'Not, sir, if I was burned all over.'

Here she rubbed the scorched finger feelingly.

'Martha Spring,' Jerome Dawe said, with majesty, 'let me hear the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.'

'Not a word,' she answered, changing her alternative; 'not if the tongue was cut out of me.'

'Martha,' Jerome said, with some memory of the English

grammar floating in his brain, 'you are my housekeeper. I exhort you, I entreat you, I command you.'

'O, very well, then,' she answered sulkily; 'you must take what you get. Here is what you said, sir: "Matty," says you, groaning and rolling over and over, but as clear as ever you are now—"Matty," says you, "my poor Matty!" It made my heart ache to hear the word.'

'Was that all?' said Jerome, as if the recital was unexpectedly flat.

'All!—not half, not a quarter,' she answered; 'that was only the preface. But lor', how you groaned it out! "Matty," says you, "I have left you without a penny—my faithful Matty," says you, "that nursed me." And then you was quiet for a minute, and then you gave another great roll, and says you, "O Matty, Matty, if I had only married you right off, how much better it would have been, and then you would have been safe;" and then you cries out, "Matty! Matty! Matty! Matty!" just like that, four times; and your voice was so full of feeling that the nurse, who happened to be sleeping in the next room, rushed in just as she was, and says she, "Where is that dog howling? he will waken the master."

'Martha,' said Jerome Dawe, with an awestruck air, 'that is the most extraordinary circumstance I ever heard of.'

'And every word of it as true,' Matty remarked solemnly, 'as if it was in a printed book. But, sir, you must remember some of it. Never tell me—you must. Now see, sir; try just if you cannot remember a little bit of it.'

'Well,' replied Jerome Dawe, who was never quite sure of anything, 'I will not say that I have

not a kind of recollection of tossing about one night, and getting my feet uncovered, and—'

'That was the time!' cried Martha eagerly; 'and I covered you over with the woollen rug, and says I, "My poor dear master, my beloved master," says I, "whom I love more than myself," says I, "do keep your feet under the blanket!"'

'And did I keep them under the blanket?' inquired Jerome Dawe, greatly interested at this point, 'or did I kick about again? I am a determined fellow. Tell me now, did I kick about again?'

'For a time you was quiet, sir,' she replied; 'then off you went worse than ever. O lor', what a night it was for poor me!'

'Well,' said Jerome Dawe, falling back upon his favourite form of words, which committed him to as little as possible, 'we must see what can be done. I will not say, Mat'—he added this so that she thought something very decisive must be coming—'I will not say but within a few weeks we shall see what can be done. You have been a faithful nurse, Matty.'

'What does Sir Walter say, sir?' remarked Martha, highly satisfied with the general result of her manœuvre. 'What are them lines that he uses about us? Says he:

"O woman, in our hours of ease
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please."

Here she treated her master to such a palpable ogle that he shifted in his chair. Then she continued, in a more tragic voice, suited to the rising of the subject:

"When pain and suffering wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou."

And she skipped out of the room with antiquated youthfulness.

'Cultivated woman, Matty,' Jerome Dawe said to himself.

He had soliloquised on similar

occasions and in exactly the same voice five hundred times before; but he spoke now as if the idea struck him for the first time.

'Cultivated woman, Matty—for her station.'

Just then a thundering rap at the front door made him leap in his chair.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

IN WHICH JEROME DAWE IS FOUND TO HAVE THREE WILLS OF HIS OWN.

'MRS. BADGER,' was then announced by Martha Spring, with as much dislike in her voice as she dared to insert.

'I guessed it was Sally,' Jerome Dawe murmured to himself. 'The energy of that woman is amazing. She *can* handle a knocker.'

During her uncle's illness Mrs. Badger had treated him with much consideration, but now that he was convalescent she thought proper to return to her habitual manner, and she entered his room with an awful step and eyes that made him tremble. There was no special animosity in her breast, indeed she was more kindly disposed towards him than usual; but her premeditated policy was to assume dominion at all times and keep him in a constant perturbation. While he was weak in body she had refrained from this severity, and had been gentle and kind; but he was now recovering, and Sally returned to her ordinary ways like a giantess refreshed.

'Well, uncle,' she cried, as she looked at him, 'you look just as well as ever.'

She said this as if he had denied the fact, which she was now reasserting with final emphasis.

'Yes, Sally,' Jerome said, with a kind of pompous submission

that was truly ludicrous, 'I am well as ever; better perhaps.'

'Not better,' Sally said sharply, 'but quite as well.'

She would not allow him to alter her words one syllable.

The particulars of the dialogue which followed need not be given. Sally Badger, with commendable candour, told Jerome that she had come to him to speak about his affairs; that while he was ill, no matter what the event might have been, she would not disturb his mind; that now, when death was far off, he ought to look the business in the face; and at last Sally boldly told him that he ought to divide his property between herself and Margaret Alexander, and that she expected he would do so before the month was out. Having delivered herself of all this in a series of snapping axioms, she paused and regarded her uncle fixedly, saying,

'Now, uncle, it is your turn to speak.'

'Sally,' said Jerome Dawe, not altogether disliking her resolution, for it saved him the trouble of deciding, or pretending to decide, 'there is a great deal in what you say. We shall see what can be done. I will not say, Sally,' he added, speaking just as he had to Martha a few minutes before, 'I will not say but within a few weeks we shall see what can be done.'

Here he was greatly disturbed at observing that the door lay partly open, and he fancied that he could see the edge of Matty's skirt. That dame was listening! Jerome Dawe writhed as he thought of the fix he was in, but he dared not signal to Sally; and she, for her part, was sitting with her back to the door, and was not likely to notice it.

'Very well,' Sally said aloud. 'Only remember what I say. You

must consider Margaret and myself, uncle, and no one beside. Promise me that you will.'

Jerome Dawe, not daring to reply audibly, took refuge in a fit of coughing, in the midst of which he nodded several times to Sally, thus conveying a promise in dumb-show. She accepted it in this form, and replied,

'You promise, then. Of course it was what you meant to do all along, but it is better to settle it.'

There and then Sally Badger kissed her uncle, and Martha Spring, outside the door, knew that she had kissed him, for the salute was of the nature of a whack. Martha drew her own conclusions from an occurrence so unparalleled, for Sally was no kisser; and in the envious housekeeper's bosom there raged the fury of a legatee who begins to realise the fearful truth of that proverb, 'Many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip.' When Sally Badger, as she went away, bade Martha 'Good-bye,' with unwonted cordiality, Martha, for her part, felt like a tigress, and could have torn her in pieces.

Straight back to the parlour she went, and she glared so savagely at poor Jerome Dawe that he too plainly read the truth in her visage, and not knowing how to face her wrath he was in sheer despair, when another knock diverted their attention for the moment, and Mr. and Mrs. Ruddock were announced. Jerome's heart leaped for relief. And Martha, banging the door, this time, to signify that she knew enough now, and need listen no more, departed to her down-stairs regions, where she so wounded and lacerated her two under-servants that they gave her notice for that day month upon the spot, and were indeed on the verge of avenging their wrongs by

assault and battery of Martha's sacred person.

Flattery and trickery, winding and doubling, syllables as soft as oil, smiles, compliments, serpentine ins and outs, but never a loud word, nor a frown, nor a harsh suggestion. So Daniel and Beatrice artfully led Jerome Dawe on from point to point, until (although Jerome did not exactly know that he had said it) Beatrice suddenly exclaimed,

'O Jerome, how good of you! how more than kind! to leave all for our darlings!'

It was beautifully, scientifically done. Pen and ink cannot describe it, nor artist's pencil. And as this chapter must quickly end, there is only space to show how Jerome, under the pressure of all these covetous people, hit upon a plan which was nothing less than brilliant. Poor brains, when squeezed suddenly and repeatedly, sometimes emit splendid freaks of the sort.

Three weeks later, after his breakfast, Jerome Dawe said solemnly to Martha Spring,

'What I am going to tell you, Martha, must never be breathed to any living being.'

Martha, reading a bequest in his eye, protested with the utmost solemnity that she would be as secret as the grave.

'If not,' said Jerome Dawe severely, taking courage in prospect of what he was going to declare, 'if not—we part for ever.' Hereupon Jerome drew out a will, duly drawn up, in which all his property was given and bequeathed to his trusted servant Martha Spring. The document was short, and the happy legatee was able to decipher its contents. Her greedy eyes sparkled with joy, and in her exultation she scarcely thought of thanking her master.

'It is not signed yet,' Jerome Dawe remarked carelessly. 'That can be done any moment. Signing is a matter of seconds.'

'Of course it is,' replied Martha, who did not fully understand the value of such an addition, and who reasoned that any request written in such fair and rotund characters must be valid in law. 'O sir, O lor', O my!'

Martha sank into a chair and wept.

That very afternoon Jerome Dawe called on Sally Badger, and drew from his pocket a similar document and bade her read it. This also was a last will and testament, and by it all Jerome Dawe's estate, real and personal, was bequeathed in equal parts to his nieces, Sarah Badger and Margaret Alexander.

'I have not signed this yet, Sally,' said Jerome. 'The signature can be added in a few moments.'

And Sally Badger, satisfied by the sight of the document, and well assured that Jerome would speedily execute it, thanked him and considered that the business was done.

Again that very evening after dinner Jerome Dawe strolled down to the residence of Daniel Ruddock, and after a little prolocution drew out a will, by which the whole of his property was bequeathed to Daniel Ruddock and his wife Beatrice or to the survivor of them. Daniel read the paper with eyes as greedy as Martha Spring's, and Beatrice walked across the room and put her arms about Jerome's neck and kissed him.

'You are too good! too—too good!' she said. 'We do not deserve this.'

'What have I always said?' Daniel cried, in a kind of appeal to the universe. 'Have I not

always said that this man has the heart of a prince? Do I say of a prince?—of a whole royal family!'

And Jerome Dawe coming home locked the three wills securely in his desk, and sat down in his chair and shook his head.

'Which it shall be I do not say,' he remarked to himself. 'Perhaps none of 'em. The best of it is I promised none of 'em! I even pointed out in every case that the will was not signed. I think I have managed cleverly.'

He mused a while longer. Then a gleam of humour lit up his face.

'Jerome,' he said, addressing himself as if he were company, 'you are a sly fellow! I declare I would not say that I know a slyer fellow than you, Jerome, for ten miles round.'

Saying which he poked himself in the ribs with the head of Shakespeare, and went up to bed in the best of spirits.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

IN WHICH PROSAIC HECTOR BADGER BECOMES THE HERO OF A MYSTERY.

'SAMMY, Sammy, it is the most extraordinary thing that has ever happened in our house.'

Thus did Sally Badger address her husband one morning, and as she spoke she rested her chin upon her hand, and her elbow upon the breakfast-table, and reflected.

'There is no doubt you are right in this case, my love,' said Mr. Badger, who was spreading butter on his bread. 'Indeed, my love, you are right in every case.'

'For Hector to ask for ten pounds, he will not say for what;

then to tell me he is going away from home for a few days, he will not say where: it is a very unusual thing. I cannot make it out.'

'I have it!' exclaimed Mr. Badger, slapping the table. 'Strange that we never thought of it before. Especially strange that *you* have not thought of it, my love.'

'Thought of what, Sammy?'

'Hector is going to enlist.'

'Nonsense, Sammy!'

'Well, my dear, perhaps you are right. Just for the moment it seemed probable.'

'Why should the boy enlist? and what would he want ten pounds for? And why should he not say he is going to enlist, when we must know all in a few days?'

'You see, Sally, my love,' said Mr. Badger, in a remonstrating tone, 'you hardly give one's little suppositions a chance. You strike at them so very soon, my love, and so very hard; and you have such strong argumentative power, Sally.'

'I cannot make it out,' Sally continued; 'something is going to happen.'

'I really do believe I have caught it this time,' Mr. Badger said, with great energy. 'Do you know, Sally, I have a decided impression on my mind that I have caught it now.'

'What is it?' Sally asked impatiently. 'Let me hear.'

'But you are so harsh and so restive, Sally; and so very rapid.'

'Not where there is sense,' she replied. 'For gracious' sake say what you have to say!'

'I believe Hector is going to sea, my love.'

'O Sammy, what a goose you are!' exclaimed his wife. 'This is worse than the other. Going to sea, indeed! Why the only time Hector was ever on the water he

was so ill that we had to put him to bed when we got home, and he looked yellow for days.'

'All I know is this,' said Mr. Badger, seeming for once disposed to argue the point, 'the whole affair has a runaway sort of look about it, and whenever young people run away they always either enlist or go to sea.'

'The question I want answered is this, Sammy,' said his wife. 'Am I to give him the money? Am I to let him go off, we do not know where?'

'I think, Sally, my love,' replied Mr. Badger, 'that as you ask that question you may as well answer it too.'

'Has it struck you lately,' asked Mrs. Badger, not regarding his attempted jest, 'that Lucy Ruddock comes a great deal to our house? She is not so fond of Mildred as she pretends to be. I am of opinion that she has taken a fancy to our Hector, or he to her, or each to each.'

'Sally, my dear,' replied Samuel Badger, growing bold in the face of this absurdity, 'you are not thinking what you say. Lucy Ruddock and our Hector! Why, such a thing was never heard of! My dear, if Daniel and Beatrice were even to hear that the thing had been dreamt of they would go mad—downright mad, Sally.'

'I am speaking of Lucy,' replied Mrs. Badger, not at all shaken. 'As to her father and mother you are right enough. But she is an odd sort of girl. Those thin lips of hers look like determination; and have you noticed her eyes when she speaks how they seem full of a kind of independent purpose, and glance at you as if she were quietly taking your measure and playing with you all the while? And do you never notice the kind of double meanings her words often

have, when she wishes to be satirical? And how she makes people ridiculous with the gravest face? And how her words looked at one way are quite innocent, and the other way are full of just the meaning she pretends not to be conveying? O Sammy, that girl is not what she seems. If Hector has taken a fancy to her, and she to Hector, I do not think that Daniel and Beatrice would find it easy to turn her.'

'Then I tell you what it is,' Mr. Badger said, greatly struck by his wife's words; 'they are going to run away together and get married, Sally, and the ten pounds are wanted to pay for the license and the cab, and the other little expenses.'

'No, no!' Sally replied, shaking her head soberly. 'They are not going to run away. Hector would as soon think of breaking into a house, or of setting fire to a ship, as of eloping; and I do not believe Lucy would be so silly either. But there is something in the wind, Sammy; there is something very serious in the wind.'

'My dear,' repeated Mr. Badger, 'there can be no doubt of it: they are going to run away.'

'Sammy,' his wife answered, roused by this unusual opposition, 'I tell you what it is. Hector shall have his ten pounds; he shall go where he pleases; I will ask him no questions; and the result will show that I am right and you are wrong.'

CHAPTER XXXIX.

IN WHICH THE MYSTERY OF HECTOR
BADGER IS AT ITS MERIDIAN.

HECTOR BADGER departed on his mysterious business, and not the slightest hint did he give of

its nature. He simply informed his mother that he would be absent for some days, and that when he returned he might tell her what he had been doing, although (he was careful to add) he might not. It may seem incredible that the domineering Sally should have allowed her son to set her authority aside in this decisive way; but the fact is that Mrs. Badger was a sensible woman, and that power of reading the character of children, which is a gift of all wise mothers, was hers also. She felt quite sure that whatever Hector might be about he was not going to commit himself to any wrong course of conduct. Besides, she rather welcomed the boldness and independence of her boy's conduct. It was like herself.

'To tell you the truth, Sammy,' she said to her husband the day Hector went away, 'I did not believe the lad had the courage in him to do anything of the kind. It is the first sign of push I have ever seen in him.'

'The Badger temperament is quiet and even subdued,' said Samuel, with a retrospective and pensive air. 'In consequence our family has for several generations been considered wanting in energy; but still waters run deep, and the Badgers have more in them than people fancy. What Hector has done is just the sort of thing I should have done myself once.'

'Not since I knew you, Sammy.'

'Perhaps not, my love.'

One thing was clear. There was no elopement with Lucy Ruddock in hand, and as if to satisfy them of that fact the girl came to the house every day. Her calls were made upon the Walsinghams. But Sally Badger remarked upon the unusual frequency of these visits, and felt

sure that Hector's absence was in some way connected with Lucy.

Lucy was perhaps not pretty, but there was an attractive piquancy about her. There was a shrewdness in her eyes, and a kind of not ill-natured satire in her expression. She possessed a musical voice, with which she could produce great effects in conversation, rolling out her dry serious sentences in a way which signified under-meaning. These qualities marked off Lucy from commonplace young women. But with all her humorous self-possession she could blush at times, and one morning she met Sally Badger in the entrance-hall, and Sally remarked that the girl coloured up, and without any of her usual easy and sportive effrontery, but a certain shyness, Lucy asked,

'How is Hector, Mrs. Badger? He is away from home, is he not?'

'Yes; gone for some days.'

'Have you heard from him?'

'Not a line,' replied Sally. She was going to have added, 'Have you?' but she restrained herself. Sally felt kindly to the girl, and more so than ever now, as she stood before her with the signs of love's sweet confusion on her fresh young cheeks.

'Sweet water out of a bitter fountain,' Sally said to herself, as the girl ran up-stairs. 'Your name is Ruddock, but not your nature. Hector would not do badly. But, O, will there not be a row when your father and mother know!'

Sally chuckled to herself. She would like to have been in the fray, doing mightily with her powerful tongue. She fancied Daniel crouching before her, hissing out his fury like a snake; and Beatrice punished for her long series of sarcasms and insults by one avenging blow. It was not Hector's securing a rich

wife that caused Sally's cheeks to glow with anticipated triumph; it was the prospect of battle and victory, and the enemy dragged along at her chariot-wheels.

The income of the Badgers had now for several years been a tolerable one, owing to the allowance made to them for the Golden Girls. But the expenses had been also great, and although Sally had tried hard to save, she had not been able to lay by much; and as the time was now approaching when Mildred would be of age, Sally foresaw that she would soon have to leave her handsome house and shrink back into a meaner abode. Mildred liked Mrs. Badger, but she had plainly intimated that she would not remain with her after she came of age. And Sally's heart was sinking. Her husband had not made any advance in life. Hector was simply a studious youth, fit for nothing that she could make out. She herself was growing old and not fit for new struggles. Let us not blame Sally if she had resolved to secure a portion of her uncle's wealth by some means or other. Her case was a desperate one; and the time was near when even she could wrestle with adversity no more.

The prettiest room in the house was the boudoir of the Golden Girls. It looked out on the flower lawn, and the French window opened on a choice balcony, where white curtains, wafting gently to and fro in the summer wind, divided the flowers within from the flowers without. The room was furnished with great taste, and bits of fancy treasure, vases, statuettes, and pictures proclaimed the riches and the taste of the Golden Girls. Violet was lying on her couch—always on that couch!—with her white and

gentle face. Mildred and Lucy were standing at the window, enjoying the morning air, and so the three girls were having their chat.

Strangely sweet was that face of Violet's, with its many imprints of suffering, patience, and refinement, and that light ripple of fun which would pass over her features every now and then. It was beautiful to see the pleasure with which she looked at the other two in their health and strength, as if no shadow from her own privations crossed her feelings, but only joy in their prosperity. And as often as Mildred or Lucy turned to speak to Violet there came a gentleness over their voices and faces—pity, love, for this frail creature dwelt in an atmosphere of tenderness, and to approach her was to be bathed in it. Not a whit of Lucy Ruddock's crisp frosty sharpness of manner was to be seen now. She spoke cheerfully to Violet, but with a sadness too; and once when she brought her a flower, and saw Violet's sweet grateful smile, struck, woman-like, by the beauty of the sick girl, she bent down and kissed her.

'What a little dear you are!' she exclaimed, trying to make a jest of it, lest Violet should see how deeply she felt.

And when Mildred and Lucy were outside on the balcony Lucy softly asked,

'What does the Doctor say?'

Mildred only shook her head, and Lucy guessed why it was that she bent over one of her flowers; but the other, who would not let any one see her feelings if she could help it, did not turn round until she had recovered her composure.

Lightly and pleasantly the girls chatted together, passing from one thing to another as fancy led.

They talked of Hector; and Lucy, with a seriousness which both Violet and Mildred remarked upon, wondered where he had gone, and what he was doing.

'I believe I know all about it,' Mildred said, with a smile.

'O, do tell me!' Lucy called out eagerly. 'I so want to know!'

'You may wait,' replied Mildred; 'but I know what neither his father nor his mother knows. Why should you want to be in the secret, Lucy?'

'Because I like to be in every secret,' Lucy answered. 'I wish you would tell me.'

'Not a word,' Mildred said inflexibly.

'Then I do not believe you know anything about it,' Lucy rejoined, trying by this taunt to extort the information.

'What I do not know I cannot tell,' replied Mildred briskly. 'And what I do know I shall not tell, so there!' And Lucy had to drop the subject.

Their talk darted off to the last ball, and Lucy twitted Mildred with the attentions of a particular captain, who was aristocratic, needy, and a noted fortune-hunter. Mildred smiled in a way which might have made the most unquailing fortune-hunter despair.

'Until I find some one who loves me for what I am, and not for what I have got,' she said, 'I keep fancy free.'

'How will you find out?' Lucy asked naturally enough. 'Men are such hypocrites.'

This deep student of masculine life made this remark with a sigh.

'I shall be a hypocrite, too,' Mildred retorted. 'When I am sufficiently interested in any man to put him to the test I have a little plan, a net, a snare; but O, good luck, good luck! here comes

Victoria and her father. Now for the Major, girls! Attention for the Major!

CHAPTER XL.

IN WHICH THE MYSTERY COMES OUT,
AND SALLY BADGER IS ASTONISHED.

'Young ladies,' the Major said, stepping about the room with great vivacity, 'you look very charming here amidst sunshine and flowers, fit companions for youth and bloom. The only thing out of place here is my gray-headed self. Victoria, I had better leave you here and take my flight. I am only a raven in a quartette of doves.'

'You don't know how tired doves become of each other,' Mildred answered. 'So please stay.'

'Time was,' the Major continued, posturing as he spoke, 'believe me, young ladies, time *was* when old Sanctuary—not old Sanctuary then—would have kept a whole dovecot in a flutter—and did it too! He was a rattle of a fellow in his day; but he has settled down, Miss Walsingham, and he keeps settling down, and the time will soon come when his few gray hairs will lie low enough.'

'Major Sanctuary,' Lucy Rud-dock called out.

'Well, Miss Lucy?'

'That part of the raven's conversation does not suit the doves. Talk of something cheerful, if you please. Make us laugh.'

'Make you laugh!' cried the Major, not a little flattered by Lucy's speech. 'That is not so easy when a man has to entertain young ladies who are full of witty thoughts to begin with. But there is something I can tell you which will interest you. Victoria and I have been staying down at

Tickenham, and there we met—we met—I give you three guesses, one apiece!'

Nobody knew.

'That excellent Mrs. Alexander who used to live here. She is settled at Tickenham. Settled in a most charming house, nice prospect, bee-aufiful furniture—model of a snug little place, I consider it.'

'Father,' Victoria said, remonstrating, 'hardly that.'

'And do you remember the widow's son, Miss Walsingham? the Major asked, addressing Mildred. 'That rough-mannered, rough-headed colt who used to live here, and was always in one mischief or another?'

'I remember that Mrs. Alexander had a son,' Mildred replied.

'Turned out the handsomest young fellow in the county!' cried the Major. 'Tall, six-foot-three, if he is an inch.'

'O father!' Victoria cried again, 'hardly that.'

'With a fine frame, a good colour, plenty of blood in his veins—and good blood, too, I can assure you—and good breeding as well as good blood; very polite to me, I must confess: all tending to show, Miss Walsingham, how surprisingly these young colts turn out sometimes.'

'What is he doing at Tickenham?' Violet asked.

The sisters had glanced at each other while this conversation went on, but Mildred seemed unwilling to speak.

'Doctor,' the Major answered, 'and an uncommonly promising doctor, too, as I understand; making the most amazing cures, one after another, until everybody is raving about him!'

'Father!' said Victoria, the third time.

'Poor old Sholto,' Lucy said, 'I always liked him.'

Neither of the Golden Girls spoke a word.

'Of course, in Tickenham, a medical man has singular advantages,' the Major continued. 'There is a medicinal spring there which, from all I hear, is most efficacious in every complaint under the sun. I assure you, Miss Walsingham, some of the anecdotes I heard of the waters were quite surprising. Cures? Miracles! Attenuated people coming there, drinking for six weeks, and going home stout, and finding the wardrobe useless—perfectly useless. On the other hand, stout people seeking relief, and getting reduced one ounce every hour by the clock, and as regular as clock-work. I heard of one old gentleman who came there rheumatic to such an extent that he had not moved for years. He began drinking the waters—liberal course; seven-and-twenty glasses a day. The effect was wonderful. The joints became limber, energy was developed, the man began to walk, and to run, and to dance, until at last the faculty had to give him a hint—he was becoming a perfect tarantula! And that was a man who six weeks before had to ring the bell for a servant when he wanted to cross his legs!'

The Major got quite hot while telling this anecdote, to which the girls listened with most creditable composure.

'And my recommendation to you is,' said the Major, turning to Violet, and speaking in a calmer voice, 'try the Tickenham waters; they will do you a world of good. You will be off that couch in a month!'

At this juncture the door was thrown open without any ceremony, and Mrs. Badger entered the room, or rather she burst into it.

'Girls!' she called out, 'do you know what has happened?'

Then, seeing Major Sanctuary, she said,

'Excuse me, Major, I did not know you were here.'

'Never mind me, madam,' the Major replied, with spirit. 'What has happened? Nothing bad, I sincerely hope.'

'No; the contrary,' Sally answered. 'Girls, Hector has come back, and where do you think he has been?'

Lucy Ruddock blushed, what lovers call beautiful, and other people painful, crimson.

'To London,' Sally continued, answering her own question before the others could speak. 'To the London University, to be examined; and he has got a scholarship, and sixty pounds a year! And they say he is so promising that he will carry everything before him!'

'O Mrs. Badger,' Violet said, with tears of pleasure in her eyes, 'I am so glad! I am sure Hector has been working for years.'

'I am delighted,' Mildred said heartily. 'I guessed something.'

'And I, Mrs. Badger,' cried the Major, 'cannot express my satisfaction. Sixty pounds a year! I daresay, when the thing is thoroughly looked into, it will be found to be one hundred and twenty, or perhaps two hundred. A very pretty income indeed!'

Lucy rose in a great hurry.

'Mrs. Badger,' she said, 'I must run away. Tell Hector how glad I am that he has been so successful.' And she bade them all good-bye in haste.

'You can deliver your own message,' Sally called after the retreating girl, with some facetiousness. 'Hector is downstairs.'

Then, with a fresh apology for her abrupt behaviour, Mrs. Bad-

ger withdrew, and going up to her own room, she found her husband. Samuel, who was brushing his hair, heard the wonderful news with his habitual placidity.

'I am not much surprised, Sally, my love,' he said, in his easy way. 'I always believed that Hector would turn out somebody some day. He has good ability; you know, Sally, talent goes from father to son. I have ability myself.'

'Nothing of the kind, Sammy.'

'Plodding ability, I mean, my love,' said Samuel Badger deferentially, for he felt he had gone too far. 'Not ambitious ability: plodding ability.'

And Samuel went down-stairs. The next minute his wife heard him call out 'Sally! Sally!' in a

most alarming voice. She flew down, expecting a catastrophe of some sort; but when she got into the parlour she found him much as usual. Only he said in a whisper,

'I thought I would like to tell you, Sally. As I came down I saw Hector and Lucy at the front door. He has gone out with her; but before the door opened, I think—I would not like to be positive—but I *think*—'

'What do you think, for goodness' sake, Sammy?'

'I think, my dear, those young people were kissing each other.'

'What if they were!' exclaimed his wife impatiently. 'Why, Sammy, from the way you called out, I thought the house was on fire!'

(To be continued.)

THE HERO AS VIRTUOSO.

(With a Portrait of Herr Joachim.)

THE field of the musical executant is unique in the service of Art. Nothing corresponding to it exists in the walks of painting or of poetry. The successful player of other men's music ranks far above the successful copyist of other men's pictures, whose highest aim is mechanical imitation, and his highest requisite gift technical dexterity; but he stands below the master painter, who both conceives and executes, whose idea and the work of its embodiment need no head, no hand, but his own. Nor can we compare him to the translator of poetry, though their aim in a sense is identical, namely, to impart significance to compositions which but for such effort would to many remain a mere dead letter. But the translator's art is something of an art of supererogation after all, imperfect at the best; its existence and his own are unnecessary for the perfect fulfilment of the intentions of the original 'maker.' The actor's calling seems, at first sight, to be exactly analogous. Irving renders Shakespeare; Liszt, Beethoven. Both come before us as the intelligent exponent of a poetic composition not their own, but written with a view to such exposition; and both have it in their power to make or to mar the effect of the work it is their mission to convey to the senses of a crowd. Thus we use one term for both — players. But the resemblance goes no further. How much the simpler and more perfect is the function of the virtuoso, who needs only his Cremona

violin, or his Broadwood grand, to be able to electrify us by the display of his fullest powers, whilst a modern Garrick could do little without the aid of a troop of fellow-actors and some elaborate machinery! The relations of player and author, again, are in music much closer, juster, and more consonant. The highest gifts of a Rubinstein or a Von Bülow can only be really manifested in the performance of music of a high order of merit. The splendid faculties of a Salvini or a Sarah Bernhardt are often seen at their best in dramas of contestable literary worth. Nay, the more brilliant the actor the less important becomes the quality of the play. Critics who denounce the extravagance of the fifth act of *Hernani*, the sickly sentiment of *La Dame aux Camélias*, the sensationalism of *The Bells*, not to mention pieces still less meritorious and entirely ephemeral in character, yet cannot deny that in spite of, nay, partly owing to, these faults, those dramas lend themselves admirably to the display of histrionic genius. Furthermore, plays need not to be acted, or even to be actable, in order to afford us all great pleasure. But music unperformed brings pleasure to no one, and profit to none but musical students. Annihilate actors, you yet retain the better part of Shakespeare. Annihilate instrumentalists, you lose all Beethoven. It is true that some persons profess to be able to derive at least equal pleasure from perusing the

score of the Eroica Symphony or the Moonlight Sonata with that which they experience from an audible performance of such masterpieces ; but to us we confess this seems something like trying to

‘ Hold a fire in our hand
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus ;
Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite
By bare imagination of a feast.’

The closest parallel to our violinist and pianist is, perhaps, offered by the portrait-painter. Like them, he does not originate anything in his subject-matter, which, like theirs, is strictly limited, whilst yet its treatment opens up to him an almost illimitable field for the display of his own originality and skill. Thus we see every grade, from the crude travesty of some national hero's head on the signboard of a tavern, to the correct but insipid subscription-portrait of the hero in some official capacity, with his heroism, as it were, knocked out of him, thence upwards to the ideal likeness by a painter capable of seizing the character of his subject, and reproducing it for us with an added inspiration of his own.

But here artist and musician part company. The ideal portrait realises the artist's inspiration once for all, and transmits it to future generations. The player's work needs daily renewal ; his achievements die with him, and can only affect his contemporaries. Hence the destiny of the virtuoso, like that of the play-actor, is to be alternately over-exalted and unduly depreciated—nay, to be worshipped and despised, one may say, in one and the same breath. Thus it is unquestionable that the majority of concert-goers consult a programme in order to learn, in the first place, who is to play ; in the second only, what is to be played ; and that, in their rapturous frenzy over a masterly ren-

dering by some popular favourite of a concerto or sonata, they forget to pay the just mental homage to the master mind who composed the work. On the other hand, we find numbers of highly-educated though musically-uneducated persons regarding this sort of *furor* as an emotional aberration, natural, perhaps, to human infirmity, but born of foolish and trivial instincts. Such start from the avowed or unavowed supposition that the pianist or violinist's art necessitates no higher qualities than does plate-spinning, dancing, or the feats of a Lulu. To such judges the ‘gentlemen of the orchestra’ appear no more as artists than would so many workers of machinery. If through the magic spell cast by some special virtuoso on our philosopher's spirit and senses he is yet carried away for a moment in spite of himself, he regards the enthusiastic sensation as a transient weakness, and philosophises on the unreason of an impulsive public who unthinkingly continue to shower gold and laurels upon men who merely profess to play what is set down for them already, to reproduce the thoughts and conceptions other minds have provided.

As if the combination of qualities indispensable to make a good instrumental performer—strength, endurance, fine and cultivated sensibilities, and extensive comprehension—were of every-day occurrence ! The triumph of ‘star’ players is ephemeral, but it is well deserved. Their names are writ in water, but they are great names. Perhaps the unreasoning mob, who draw them home in their carriages and lavish acclamations and distinctions upon their heads, are right in their first impulse, and are only meting out just measure after all.

The oft-heard lament over the degradation of fine art in the pre-

sent age does not extend to the art which *par excellence* we call divine. Whatever has waned or deteriorated in this era of commercialism, positivism, and scepticism, music has thriven, and thrives remarkably well. The concert-room rivals, nay, and to some extent has superseded, the theatre as a place of popular recreation. The ideal expression of the age, its best poetry, incline more and more to adapt musical form. No fresh Goethe or Shakespeare arises to give us a new *Faust* or *Romeo and Juliet*. But in the works of Gounod and Berlioz suggested by these dramas, we have musical poems of the highest quality. Byron is not here to write *Mazeppa*, but there is Liszt to transmute it into a symphony. The poem of the future is the musical poem. In this art, at least, the last half of the nineteenth century has produced composers—and promises to number many more—of equal greatness with their august predecessors. To such an age we might naturally look also to produce a representative of the highest type of the virtuoso; and we see many whom society, after its fashion, delights to honour, yet the question remains if it honours them enough.

The world knows nothing of its greatest men. It never will know much. If the gods came to live among us in human form, we should soon get so used to their superhuman gifts as to cease to revere the possessors. One might be a prophet, another have wings, another discourse with birds and bees. So long as the divinity slept, dressed, ate, talked as we do, we should mostly forget to remember that he was a remarkable person, when he was not actually engaged in the practice of his superhuman accomplishments. So often with great men. In the case of a great

player, the outside public frequently think of and judge of him personally as a thing quite apart from his performance, as though he and it had, or might have, little or nothing to do with each other. If he seem dull and incommunicative in society—a natural result in those whose powers of self-expression, however they develop, will always be mainly absorbed in the practice of musical art—society readily classes him as inferior in intelligence, insignificant in character. On the whole, it seems to expect this, and surprise is sometimes expressed when the contrary is made evident; and, on a nearer acquaintance, they perceive the superior cultivation and refinement of the player's mind—an influence of the musical profession that always raises its humblest members somewhat above the average of the social class to which they belong. In the estimation of the majority of the public, the virtuoso has probably no advantage over themselves but nimble fingers and mechanically acquired memory. He plays divinely, and yet it is as likely as not that he may have a mean and commonplace soul. The power, wide range of expression, the imagination, the taste they rave about in his musical performance, may, they think, like those sweet notes themselves, 'survive not the lute.'

This is a fallacy, nay, an absurdity. The moral and mental qualities all great players possess—as without them they never could have become great players—are those which everywhere entitle a human being to superior respect. The qualities needed for the greatest among great players are those which in other vocations would constitute a hero, and unto which no one would be ashamed openly to award their just meed of

enthusiasm. To reach the point of distinction as a musical executant requires a zeal, patience, resolution, devotion, of which few outside the profession ever form an idea. Take the technique alone, indispensable to any public performer, but which by itself will not enable him to rise: its mastery demands prodigies of industry and self-abnegation. 'When you think you play to perfection, do as I did then,' so said perhaps the most wonderful executant of our day to a neophyte who prayed of him to explain how such wondrous facility was to be acquired: 'practise twelve hours a day for fifteen years more.'

Such an ordeal clearly would crush the life and mind out of an ordinary commonplace organism; but our virtuoso must needs preserve an extraordinarily wide and active intelligence. How can an ordinary mind grasp and render again satisfactorily the character of music of various styles, passing rapidly from one to another, from Bach to Chopin, from Mendelssohn to Liszt, exercising in all the same penetrating sympathy, without which he must fail to do justice to the composer's intent? His head, heart, and hands have to interpret aright, and to impress on other people, however dull and unprepared, the conceptions of a score of great minds, many of whom, perhaps, never could have understood each other. There is scope in such a task for more than skill, for more than talent—for genius of the highest order, though of a peculiar and subtle quality.

If the high mental gifts of our virtuoso fail to attain full general recognition, it is because their manifestation in his calling is indirect. So also with his character. The influence on artists and amateurs, and, through them, on the art of a whole nation, that

a single 'star' player may exercise for good, for bad, or questionable effect, is immense and manifold. It does not begin and end with the simple pleasure he has it in his power to bestow by the exercise of his gift. But the huge power such a one possesses for surprising and delighting his fellow-creatures can, like all great powers, be used or abused. He may devote it mainly to self-glorification. This, in certain phases of musical culture, may mean pandering to a dull or degraded musical taste, or it may involve the unfair extinction of other artists who may collaborate in his performance—the ignoring by the leader of his duties to his subordinates and to the composer. Or he may apply it, in the first place, to the rapid amassing of wealth, the short road to which in music, as in all other fine arts, has never been that of loyalty to the cause. Absolute disinterestedness of aim and singleness of action we shall not always find in our virtuoso. We shall not for that deny him admiration, any more than we should refuse to admire a meteor because it is not a planet. Men—artists especially—are what they can be; and not unto every one is it given to be a guiding star. Such knights-errant of art may hold a high, if not the highest, grade in the grand army; their influence is not always durable, and often mixed; they are less great among the greatest. Musical training itself, and the life of a public performer, with its constant excitement and strain on the nerves, are calculated to develop susceptibilities abnormally; and the reaction from the constant effort required by the need of displaying his highest faculties daily, to order, sometimes shows itself in the exaggeration of petty idiosyn-

crasies—ascribed at once to inordinate self-conceit or childish folly by an idle crowd.

Is it thus that the world has come to associate in their minds the idea of 'fiddling' in particular with trickery, jugglery, and mountebank's feats, as though it were an art of a quality essentially volatile and contemptible?

If it were in the power of a single artist lastingly to dissociate violin-playing and vain triviality, and thus to do away with an ancient prejudice—an achievement next door to a miracle—we of this generation have seen it done, the violinist type reconstructed, and for ever connected in our minds with the very qualities in which the typical 'fiddler' was once assumed to be inherently deficient—with constancy, thoroughness, stern rectitude, absolute fidelity to a serious purpose—all through the powerful personality of the greatest violinist of our own or, indeed, of any other age.

The brilliant genius and immense natural powers which we admire in a virtuoso first of all are, perhaps, less rare than is supposed. But their perfect culture and development, without which they are impotent, is rare enough; and rarest is it to see the influence they bestow, as in the example before us, steadily and conscientiously devoted to the highest interests of the art with which he has come to be identified.

A career like that of Herr Joseph Joachim may be sketched in a few words. Born in 1831 at Kittsee, a village near Pressburg, the ancient capital of Hungary, but within fifty miles of Vienna, he became a violin pupil at five years old, played in public at seven at Pesth, and then passed five years of study at the Vienna Conservatorium under Boehm. Already,

at twelve, he silenced critics and surpassed veteran players. In 1843 he went to Leipzig, where Mendelssohn resided, who at once recognised the extraordinary talent of the boy. There Joachim studied for some years under David. His first appearance in this country was made in 1844, when his performance of Beethoven's concerto at a Philharmonic Concert, conducted by Mendelssohn, elicited the utmost enthusiasm. Since then the years have been few in which he has not visited England, which has thus become closely associated with his career of forty years of uninterrupted success as a solo performer and a leader of chamber music. In Germany he has successively held appointments at Weimar, 1849-53; Hanover, 1853-66; and at Berlin, where from 1868 to the present time he has occupied the post of Director of the Musical Academy. If his first introduction to England as a boy of thirteen established his brilliant reputation among us, his every subsequent visit has helped to consolidate at once his popularity and his influential musical position. Impossible to overestimate the good he has done towards furthering musical cultivation in England. None but a star of the first magnitude could have done it, and, perhaps, not another would have done it. The millions, to be taken captive in the first instance, need a phenomenal virtuoso. Their affections once won, they let their taste be formed, educated, refined, by their favourite. It is well for them when he, like Herr Joachim, turns his energies exclusively into the right direction, towards the popularising of high-class music, scorning the aim of self-elevation. He familiarises and endears good music to all listeners by his wonderful gift, till they find they

have grown to know and love the music for its own sake, apart from the artist. Nor is it only the public who are benefited by such a course. All right-minded professionals, and the profession itself, are raised by it. The youngest player in an orchestra sees in such a self-forgotful master the block of which he should be a chip, and fulfils his part better and with more zest in consequence. In the furthering of the progress of musical art among us generally,

in the raising of its standard, the spreading of the taste for it where its refining, refreshing spirit was urgently needed, in the encouraging and banding together of the true followers in the right cause, no single virtuoso has ever accomplished so much as has been worked by the steadfast, vigorous influence, direct and indirect, personal and professional, of the great representative violinist of our time.

B. T.

'CARPE DIEM.'

Now, in the season of flowers,
 Now, when the summer is bright,
 When Phœbus stays long with the Hours,
 And the earth hardly knows any night,
 The time for enjoyment is ours,
 The time for delight.

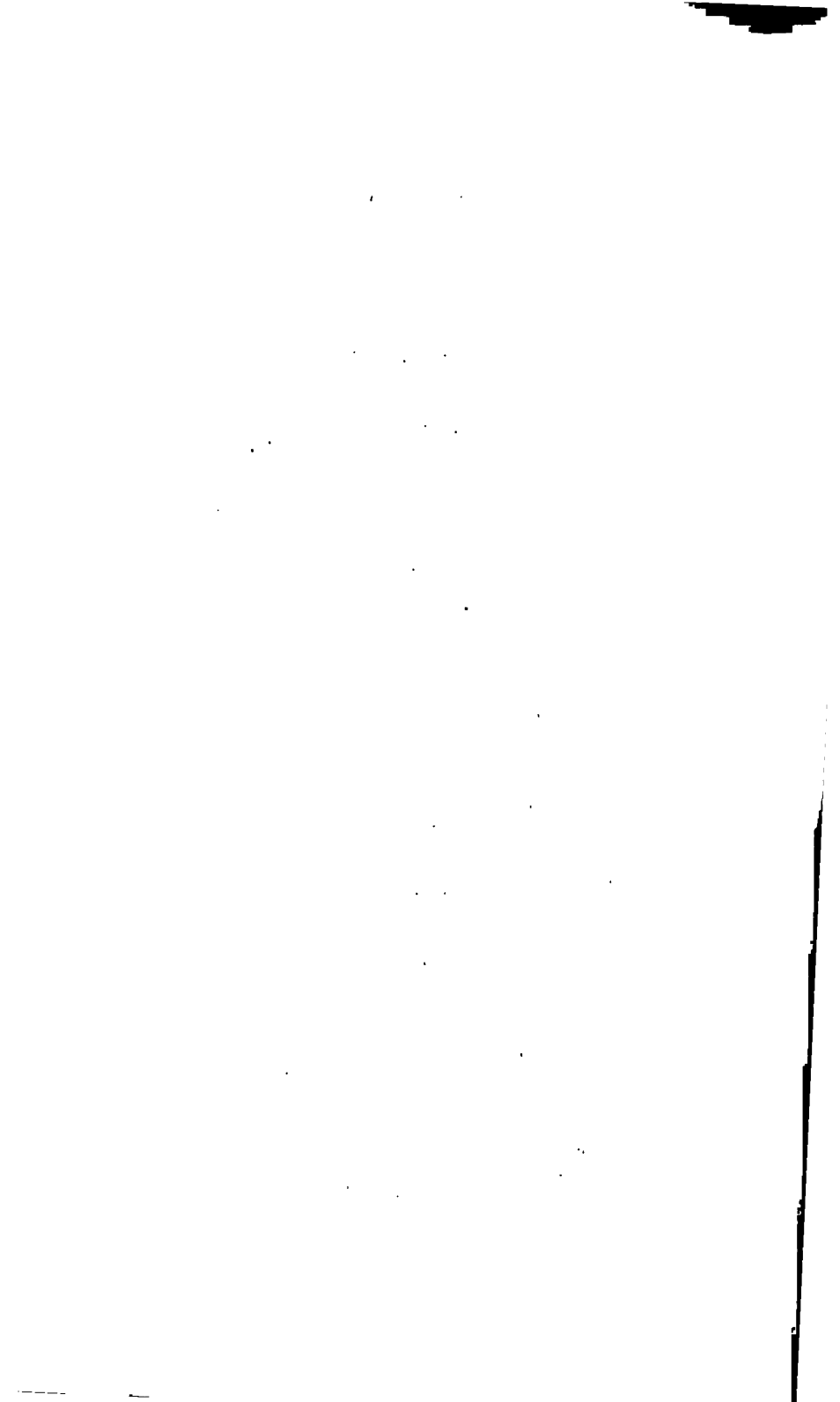
Ere the chill winds have scattered the roses,
 Ere the petals lie dead on the earth;
 Ere the season of sweet blossoms closes,
 And the cold winter months have their birth,
 Let us join, ere the year its youth loses,
 In laughter and mirth.

Ah, sweet, youth can last not for ever,
 But will fade like a dream that is naught
 Though we fancy that summer dies never,
 And on winter bestow not a thought;
 But Time is a weariless weaver,
 His task is soon wrought.

Then we'll spend not our days in sad guesses
 As to what the dim future may bring,
 But we'll cast off each thought that oppresses,
 For life is a fugitive thing;
 And, happy in love's soft caresses,
 We'll dream but of spring.

C. A. C.







JOACHIM.

See 'The Hero as Virtuoso.'

CAPTAIN REES HOWELL GRONOW.

AMONG the many gossipmongers, anecdotists, *raconteurs*, who have amused the public with their recollections during the latter half of the present century, there are few, if any, more agreeable than Captain Gronow. His reminiscences are not disfigured by the ill-nature of Charles Greville, or the egotism of Grantley Berkeley and William Lennox. He is modest, unaffected, good-natured, and has a peculiarly pleasant way of telling a good story. Captain Gronow's recollections cover an interesting period, both in the social and political history of England. Born of an ancient Welsh family in Glamorganshire in 1794, he went as a boy to Eton, when Dr. Keate wielded the birch there, entered the Guards as an ensign in 1813, served in the Peninsula War and at Waterloo, was elected member for Stafford in the first reformed Parliament, and thus had exceptionally varied experiences of high life and fashionable society, both in London and Paris. In the preface to the first volume of his *Reminiscences* he thus indicates the nature and extent of the personal memories which he wishes to impart:

'It has been my lot to have lived through the greater part of one of the most eventful centuries of England's history, and I have been thrown amongst most of the remarkable men of my day, whether soldiers, statesmen, men of letters, theatrical people, or those whose birth and fortune—rather, perhaps, than their virtues or talents—have caused them to be conspicuous in society at home

or abroad. Nature having endowed me with a strong memory, I can recall, with all their original vividness, scenes that took place fifty years ago, and distinctly recollect the face, walk, and voice, as well as the dress and general manner, of every one whom I have known. I have frequently repeated to my friends what I have seen and heard since the year that I joined the Guards (1813), and have been urged to commit to paper my anecdotes and reminiscences.'

Personally, Captain Gronow was a remarkably handsome man, always faultlessly dressed, and generally popular in society. But, as we have already remarked, he says little about himself in his *Reminiscences*, and, beyond the fact of a casual allusion to his marvellous skill as a pistol-shot, we learn nothing of his accomplishments from his books. He and Captain Ross, the *doyen* of riflemen, were, by the way, unquestionably, the two best pistol-shots in the world. Captain Ross was intimately acquainted with Gronow, and has given the following authentic account of a celebrated duel, in the Bois de Boulogne, in which the latter was engaged. Gronow's antagonist was a notorious French bully, famed for his deadly skill with the pistol. 'Gronow,' says Captain Ross, 'told us the story. He said that the Frenchman stuck his glove on a tree, and, in a swaggering tone, asked Gronow which finger he should hit; and, after hitting the glove, he said to Gronow, "I will serve you in the same way." Captain Hesse (Gro-

now's second, afterwards killed in a duel) said to him, "You must do something to try and shake that fellow's nerve;" so he threw up his hat in the air, and Gronow put his bullet through it, and then, bowing to the Frenchman, said, "*Monsieur, voilà votre destiné!*" A few minutes and the destiny was fulfilled. Gronow was anything but a quarrelsome or bullying person. Attempts were made several times to get up a match between him and myself, but he would not go into it. He told me that since his duels in Paris (he fought two) he could not bear the sight of a pistol. It would have been a rare match, as neither of us had ever been beaten; and as we had never tried our skill together, it is impossible to say who would have won. At very long ranges (from fifty to a hundred yards) I probably would have had the best of it, as I practised a good deal at those ranges.' Captain Gronow's later years were passed in Paris, where he died on the 20th of November 1865, in the seventy-second year of his age. A short time before his death, when he was correcting the proofs of his last volume, he wrote, in somewhat melancholy strain, to his publishers as follows:

'I have lived long enough to have lost all my dearest and best friends. The great laws of humanity have left me on a high and dry elevation, from which I am doomed to look over a sort of Necropolis, whence it is my delight to call forth certain choice spirits of the past.' Some of his racy anecdotes of these 'choice spirits,' and of his contemporaries generally, we now subjoin.

JOHN KEMBLE.—In the autumn of 1821 I met Mr. and Mrs. Kemble at Lausanne, at a dinner

given by Lady Caroline Capel (mother of the present Earl of Essex), and a few weeks later I saw them again at Milan, where, as we lived at the same hotel, I had the pleasure of passing much time in their company. The first evening we went together to the Scala. I remember the great tragedian exclaiming, as he surveyed the proportions of that magnificent theatre, 'How like old Drury!'

The opera pleased him well enough; but with the ballet he was quite delighted and highly amused; for the dancers, by order of the police, were obliged to wear sky-blue pantaloons which reached down to their knees, but were so tight that the outline of the figure was more apparent, and the effect produced more indelicate than if the usual gauze inexpressibles had been used. Kemble, after a hearty laugh, inveighed, in no measured terms, against the Imperial Government, saying,

'What bullies and savages these Austrians are! They interfere with the unfortunate Italians in everything, even in their amusements, and make even the dancing-girls put on the breeches of their Hungarian infantry.'

I wish I could remember some of the numerous anecdotes of this remarkable man, who, without being actually witty, had a vein of rich dry humour; which, contrasting with his grave classical face, deep sepulchral voice, and serious manner, had a very ludicrous effect.

John Kemble had the honour of giving the Prince of Wales some lessons in elocution. According to the vitiated pronunciation of the day, the Prince, instead of saying 'oblige,' would say 'obleege,' upon which Kemble, with much disgust depicted upon his countenance, said,

'Sir, may I beseech your Royal

Highness to open your royal jaws, and say "oblige"?"

Conway was a mediocre actor, but a very handsome man, and a great favourite with the fair sex. On some one asking Kemble if Conway was a good actor, the only answer they could get from Kemble was, 'Mr. Conway, sir, is a very tall young man.' 'But what do you think of him?' 'I think Mr. Conway is a very tall young man.'

One day he was saying before Lord Blessington, who was an amateur actor of no mean capacity, that the worst professional player was better than the best amateur performer. Lord Blessington, somewhat nettled by this observation, asked John Kemble if he meant to say that Conway acted better than he did.

'Conway,' replied Kemble, in his most sepulchral voice, 'is a very strong exception.'

Like the Sheridans, the Kembles were a most remarkable family.

ROGERS AND LUTTRELL.—I saw a good deal of the poet Rogers during his frequent visits to Paris, and often visited him in his apartments, which were always on the fourth or fifth story of the hotel or private house in which he lived. He was rich, and by no means avaricious, and chose those lofty chambers, partly from a poetic wish to see the sun rise with greater brilliancy, and partly from a fancy that the exercise he was obliged to take in going up and down stairs would prove beneficial to his liver.

I could relate many unpublished anecdotes of Rogers, but they lose their piquancy when one attempts to narrate them. There was so much in his appearance, in that cadaverous, unchanging countenance, in the peculiar low

drawling voice, and rather tremulous accents in which he spoke. His intonations were very much those one fancies a ghost would use if forced by some magic spell to give utterance to sounds. The mild venom of every word was a remarkable trait in his conversation. One might have compared the old poet to one of those velvety caterpillars that crawl gently and quietly over the skin, and leave an irritating blister behind. To those who, like myself, were *sans* consequence, and with whom he feared no rivalry, he was very good-natured and amiable, and a most pleasant companion, with a fund of curious anecdote about everything and everybody. But woe betide those in great prosperity and renown! They had, like the Roman Emperor, in Rogers the personification of the slave who bade them 'remember they were mortal.'

At an evening party many years since, at Lady Jersey's, every one was praising the Duke of B——, who had just come in, and who had lately attained his majority. There was a perfect chorus of admiration to this effect: 'Everything is in his favour—he has good looks, considerable ability, and a hundred thousand a year.' Rogers, who had been carefully examining the 'young ruler,' listened to these encomiums for some time in silence, and at last remarked, with an air of great exultation, and in his most venomous manner, 'Thank God, he has got bad teeth!'

His well-known epigram on Mr. Ward, afterwards Lord Dudley—

'They say that Ward's no heart, but I deny it;
He has a heart, and gets his speeches by it!'

—was provoked by a remark made at table by Mr. Ward. On Rogers

observing that his carriage had broken down, and that he had been obliged to come in a hackney coach, Mr. Ward grumbled out, in a very audible whisper, 'In a hearse, I should think,' alluding to the poet's corpse-like appearance. This remark Rogers never forgave; and, I have no doubt, pored for days over his retaliatory impromptu, for he had no facility in composition. Sydney Smith used to say that, if Rogers was writing a dozen verses, the street was strewn with straw, the knocker tied up, and the answer to the tender inquiries of his anxious friends was, that Mr. Rogers was as well as could be expected.

It used to be very amusing in London to see Rogers with his 'Fidus Achates,' Luttrell. They were inseparable, though rival wits, and constantly saying bitter things of each other. Luttrell was the natural son of Lord Carhampton, Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, and, in his youth, known as the famous Colonel Luttrell of Junius. I consider him to have been the most agreeable man I ever met. He was far more brilliant in conversation than Rogers; and his animated bustling manner formed an agreeable contrast with the spiteful calmness of his corpse-like companion. He was extremely irritable, and even passionate; and in his moments of passion he would splutter and stutter like a maniac in his anxiety to give utterance to the flow of thoughts that crowded his mind, and, I might almost say, his mouth.

On one occasion the late Lady Holland took him a drive in her carriage over a rough road, and, as she was very nervous, she insisted on being driven at a foot's pace. This ordeal lasted some hours; and when he was at last released, poor Luttrell, perfectly exasperated, rushed into the near-

est club-house, and exclaimed, clenching his teeth and hands, 'The very funerals passed us!'

The last time I saw him was at Paris, in June 1849, when I remember meeting him at a very pleasant dinner at the Frères Provençaux. Lord Pembroke, Lockwood, Auriol, Lord Hertford, and one or two others were present; and though Luttrell was then above eighty years of age, we thought him quite delightful. He had lost none of the fire and eagerness of youth, but took the greatest interest in everything that was going on in Paris at that most exciting period; and I had for several days the great pleasure of acting as his cicerone.

Strange to say, on his return to England he married a second time, but died shortly afterwards. He was the author of 'Advice to Julia,' and other poems; but nothing that he ever wrote gave an idea of the amusing variety of his conversation and his brilliant wit and humour. He was the last of the 'conversationists.'

CIVILITY REWARDED. — We have all heard the story alluded to by Charles Lamb, in the *Essays of Elia*, of the bank clerk who was in the habit, as he proceeded daily to his office, of giving a penny to a crossing-sweeper, and how, in process of time, the sweeper died and left five thousand pounds, which sum had been half a century in accumulating, to the charitable *employé*. The grandfather of the present Marquis of Hertford having been very civil to an old gentleman in a stage-coach during a journey to York, the said old gentleman very kindly died shortly after, and left his lordship a large fortune.

But I know of no incident more curious than the following, the moral of which would seem

to be that we ought all to go to church early and secure a good place. Like the novel of *Waterley*, 'tis sixty years since,' when a young gentleman named Green, the son of a clergyman, wishing to hear a famous preacher, went one Sunday morning unusually early to church, and thereby secured a good place in a pew near the preacher. The church filled rapidly, and a venerable and rather infirm-looking old gentleman, after walking up and down the various aisles, being unable to get a seat, was about to leave the church, when Green, who was a good-natured young fellow, took pity on him, as he looked very weak and ill, and offered him his seat. It was accepted with many thanks, whilst Green stood with his back against the wall during the service and sermon. On leaving the church the old gentleman again thanked him, and asked his name and address, which were given. A few days after, Mr. Green received an invitation to dinner from the stranger, who was living in Grosvenor-square. It would appear that the acquaintance thus formed became a fast friendship; for the old gentleman shortly afterwards died, and left the whole of his fortune, a very considerable one, to his young friend, with the condition that he should take the name of Wilkin-son in addition to that of Green. I may add that the young gentleman made the most excellent use of the fortune which he owed to his good-nature and civility, and became the head of a very popular and prosperous family.

Apropos of pews and pew-openers, I remember, when I was staying at Deal some years back, an incident, in which a lady who had not the good breeding of Mr. Green played a somewhat unenviable part.

The Duke of Wellington, then residing at Walmer Castle, had walked one Sunday evening into Deal, and entered Trinity Church. After wandering about for some time in search of the sexton (who, as a matter of course, was engaged elsewhere), the Duke ensconced himself in a roomy-looking pew in front of the pulpit. After a short time a lady, of portly and pompous appearance, the owner of the pew, entered. After muttering a prayer, she cast a scowl at the intruder, which was intended to drive him out of the place he had taken. She had not the least idea who he was, and would probably have given her eyes, had she known him, to have touched the hem of the great Duke's cloth cloak, or asked for his autograph. Seeing that the stranger bore the brunt of her indignant glance without moving, the lady bluntly told the Duke, as she did not know him, that she must request he would immediately leave her pew. His Grace obeyed, and chose another seat. When he was leaving the church at the end of the service, and had at last found the sexton, who received him with many bows and salutations, he said,

'Tell that lady she has turned the Duke of Wellington out of her pew this evening.'

HOBY THE BOOTMAKER, of St. James's-street, was not only the greatest and most fashionable bootmaker in London, but, in spite of the old adage, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*, he employed his spare time with considerable success as a Methodist preacher at Islington. He was a pompous fellow, with a considerable vein of sarcastic humour.

I remember Horace Churchill (afterwards killed in India with the rank of Major-General), who

was then an ensign in the Guards, entering Hoby's shop in a great passion, saying that his boots were so ill-made that he should never employ Hoby for the future. Hoby, putting on a pathetic cast of countenance, called to his shopman,

'John, close the shutters. It is all over with us. I must shut up shop; Ensign Churchill withdraws his custom from me.'

Churchill's fury can better be imagined than described.

On another occasion, the late Sir John Shelley came into Hoby's shop to complain that his top-boots had split in several places. Hoby quietly said,

'How did that happen, Sir John?'

'In walking to my stable.'

'Walking to your stable!' said Hoby, with a sneer. 'I made the boots for riding, not walking.'

THE LIGHT COMPANY'S POODLE.
—Every regiment has a pet of some kind. The Light Company of my battalion of the 1st Guards, in 1813, rejoiced in a very handsome poodle, which had, if I mistake not, been made prisoner at Vittoria. At the commencement of the battle of the 9th of December 1813, near the Mayor's house, not far from Bidart, we observed the gallant Frederick Ponsonby well in front with the skirmishers; and by the side of his horse the soldier's poodle. The Colonel was encouraging our men to advance; and the poodle, in great glee, was jumping and barking at the bullets as they flew round him like hail. On a sudden we observed Ponsonby struggling with a French mounted officer, whom he had disarmed, and was endeavouring to lead off to our lines, when the French skirmishers, whose numbers had

increased, fired several shots, and wounded Ponsonby, forcing him to relinquish his prisoner, and to retire. At the same time a bullet broke one of the poor dog's legs. For his gallant conduct in this affair, the poodle became, if possible, a still greater favourite than he was before; and his friends, the men of the Light Company, took him to England, where I saw my three-legged friend for several years afterwards, the most prosperous of poodles and the happiest of the canine race.

LORD ALVANLEY'S WIT.—On the way home, after his duel with O'Connell, in a hackney coach, Lord Alvanley said, 'What a clumsy fellow O'Connell must be to miss such a fat fellow as I am! He ought to practise at a haystack to get his hand in.' When the carriage drove up to Alvanley's door, he gave the coachman a sovereign. Jarvie was profuse in his thanks, and said, 'It's a great deal for only having taken your lordship to Wimbledon.'

'No, my good man,' said Alvanley, 'I give it you, not for taking me, but for bringing me back.'

Everybody knows the story of Gunter the pastrycook. He was mounted on a runaway horse with the king's hounds, and excused himself for riding against Lord Alvanley by saying, 'O, my lord, I can't hold him, he's so hot!' 'Ice him, Gunter—ice him!' was the consoling rejoinder.

PICTON'S OPINION OF OUR OFFICERS.—During my passage from Ramsgate to Ostend with Sir Thomas Picton, *en route* to Waterloo, the General, whose demeanour was stern and forbidding, and of whom we all stood very much in awe, was, on this occa-

sion, in great good-humour and high spirits. He talked, with his usual oaths (which the reader will pardon me if I transcribe), a good deal about the Peninsular War, and the relative merits of the French and English armies. He greatly praised the soldier-like qualities and military talents of the French officers, and said,

‘If I had fifty thousand such men as I commanded in Spain, with French officers at their head, I’m d—d if I wouldn’t march from one end of Europe to the other!’

We were all astounded at this praise of the French; and Chambers, very much piqued, observed,

‘This is the first time we have heard, Sir Thomas, that French officers were superior to our own.’

‘What!’ said Picton, ‘never heard they were superior to ours!’

why, d—n it, where is our military education? where our military schools and colleges? We have none—absolutely none! Our greatest generals—Marlborough and Wellington—learnt the art of war in France. Nine French officers out of ten can command an army, whilst our fellows, though brave as lions, are totally and utterly ignorant of their professions. D—n it, sir, they know nothing! We are saved by our non-commissioned officers, who are the best in the world.’

We all felt very much disgusted and humiliated at these remarks, and considered them at the time unjust; but I am now certain that the general was right, and that our officers at the time, beyond extraordinary dash and pluck, had none of the qualities required in those who were destined to command the finest troops in the world.

‘TO LIVE FORGOTTEN AND LOVE FORLORN.’

It comes at last, the summer-time
I long for; and my rambling moods
Held vocal with full-throated rhyme
In blossomed meadows of the woods.

It comes, yet seemed to never come,
The warmth to lift my heart from cold,
With bleating lambs about the home,
And yellow gorse to grace the wold.

Our roof stands there by the beacon-light,
Where brackens nod and grasses blow;
Where, scaled off down the crazy height,
The cliffs have fallen from high to low.

We laughed from above on the glowing world
Spread open. There the waters lie
In moving foam-wreaths lightly furled,
And there the bushes point the sky.

Below, the village nestles still,
Close where the jutting pier-works peep
From out the headland; by the hill
The far-off masts of shipping sleep.

My sailor went; and the storm was high,
And the waves shrieked white on their thundered floor:
With so many sailors sailed to die,
Shall never I have my one any more?

The lengthening day, the lingering night,
Alone, while surged the waters down;
Alone, beneath the wan moonlight,
That mocked me in its easy frown.

Or, bidding tears, I woke to tongue
The jarring echoes of my griefs,
Alone, where awful blackness hung
Sullen in silence on the reefs.

All gone, the leaden hours are gone?
The wailing wind and drip of rain
That clasped the lichen to the stone,
And steeped my heart with closer pain?

Weary to me, who sit and wait the rays
Of sunshine, as the sun could shine of old;
Weary to wait the life of newer days:
So slow the gray-banked clouds their lines unfold.

C. KITCHIN.

THREE WIZARDS AND A WITCH.

BY MRS. J. H. RIDDELL, AUTHOR OF 'THE SENIOR PARTNER,'
'GEORGE GEITH OF FEN COURT,' ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

SIR GEOFFREY'S TACTICS.

'LEAVE me to deal with the fellow, Gayre,' said Sir Geoffrey cheerfully. 'You are not fit for the task. In your own way you are confoundedly clever—no doubt of that; but aptitude for business is one thing—gad, I wish I wasn't such a fool about figures and money!—and a knowledge of human nature another. You made a mistake with your friend—one you would not have caught your simple brother-in-law committing. He never ought to have gone with us to Mrs. Jubbins—never. He thinks now Peggy and myself are no better than her lot, and that *he is as good as we are*. He thought great guns of you once; now he knows your "native heath" is much the same as his own—' and as the Baronet left his sentence thus unfinished, in order to light a fresh cigar, Mr. Gayre felt the pause which ensued more explicit and humiliating than any words could have proved.

It was three days after the party at The Warren. Mrs. Jubbins had been discussed, re-discussed, praised, criticised, disparaged, blamed; and now there was nothing left for the majority of her guests to do, save call and see whether 'the Earl of Merioneth's house' seemed as grand a place when viewed in cold blood as it had done while filled with visitors who walked through the rooms to the strains of music and

the popping of champagne corks. Things during that three days had not been going pleasantly with Mr. Gayre; on the contrary, when he went to Chislehurst, ostensibly to inquire how Mrs. Jubbins felt after her exertions, he found Miss Drummond was walking through the woods, accompanied by Mr. Hilderton. The widow told him this fact with a look of mournful significance, and he really felt too much dispirited to inform the lady he was satisfied his niece, and not her friend, had won the poor prize of a struggling and sulky artist's heart. No, many a man was caught on the rebound, and he did not know, he could not be sure. After all, the girl might scarcely understand her own mind; possibly she mistook the actual state of her feelings. This sisterly sort of intimacy, this familiar intercourse, was dangerous—very.

Supposing Susan were Mrs. Gayre, would he allow, would he tolerate it? Certainly, Mr. Gayre decided, he would do nothing of the kind. It was all very well to talk, but Lal was not her brother; worse still, he was disgustingly handsome—and young. Yes, just the lover a girl might fancy; and Susan was only a girl, and the common-sense view of the matter must be considered the right sense. The whole thing was unusual and incorrect. He thought he would drop a word of warning; but, somehow, when the culprits appeared, he found it would be

very hard to make Miss Drummond understand the full enormity of which she had been guilty, and decided that to lecture her on the subject of 'propriety' would be like discoursing to a child concerning those sins which it is the endeavour of older persons, who have eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, to keep hidden from its innocence.

At dinner, to which meal Mr. Gayre stopped, for Mrs. Jubbins would take no denial, Susan was charming; less gay than formerly, perhaps a little sad, certainly most sweet. She had been teaching Ida how to ride, and caused some laughter by an account of that young lady's mishaps.

'I don't know what in the world we are to do without her, Mr. Gayre,' said Mrs. Jubbins, referring to Susan not her daughter; 'we shall feel lost.'

'When is the parting to take place?' asked the banker, who felt delighted to hear Miss Drummond's sojourn at Chislehurst was soon to be ended.

'I am going to Enfield to-morrow,' said Susan.

'To Enfield?' repeated Mr. Gayre; 'not to North Bank?'

'I have written to tell Maggie I cannot return there just at present.'

'So we shall all have to go into mourning,' said the banker; at which remark Lal Hilderton scowled. He thought this rich man was sneering at his old friend.

The next check Mr. Gayre met was received from the artist. In the most courteous manner possible he asked Mr. Hilderton to paint Miss Chelston's portrait, and was met with a flat refusal.

'I don't intend to paint any more portraits,' declared Lal, with rude directness.

Susan looked at him reproach-

fully and sighed. Mr. Gayre saw the look and heard the sigh.

'It breaks my heart to think of her being tied to such a bear,' said Mrs. Jubbins afterwards.

'Why do you ask him here?' inquired the banker.

'I did not ask him. He came, and I could not well tell him to go. Of course he will not come when she is gone,' which was very poor comfort for the middle-aged lover.

Going the following afternoon to North Bank, in hopes of hearing why Susan had decided on returning to Enfield, and when she might be again expected at Mr. Moreby's villa, he found Mr. Sudlow partaking of afternoon tea, and was unpleasantly struck by a change in his manner, rather to be felt than defined. They had not met since the morning when Mr. Gayre administered what he meant for a crushing rebuke, and the banker was certainly not prepared to find this former disciple had cut his leading-strings, and was walking quite independently about the world, 'showing his d——d cloven foot,' said Sir Geoffrey.

Few things could have discomposed Mr. Gayre to an equal extent. Hitherto Mr. Sudlow had looked up to him, adopted his views, been guided by his advice, received his admonitions modestly and in a good spirit, as if he knew they proceeded from one having authority; but now all that was changed. He ventured to disagree with the banker, not once or twice, but many times; he spoke more familiarly to Sir Geoffrey than young Graceless would have done; and only the beautiful coldness and propriety of Miss Chelston's demeanour prevented his addressing that young lady 'as though she was some girl standing behind a counter, by Heaven.'

declared the Baronet, talking 'the cad' over after his departure.

Much exercised about the change which seemed to him to have been wrought so suddenly, Mr. Gayre told Sir Geoffrey that remark concerning young Graceless, and delicately hinted it was not impossible some of those rumours that the best of men are not always able to escape had reached Mr. Sudlow's ears.

'It is not that,' answered the Baronet. 'I don't pretend to be better than my neighbours. No one can say I have ever set myself up as a paragon of virtue. I admit I have faults; who is without them? Even you, Gayre, are not immaculate, I'll be bound. I am too easy, too frank, too trustful, too willing to forgive, too ready to be duped. But it's nothing he has heard about me that has caused this transformation. Your friend Sudlow needs taking down a peg; his comb wants cutting, and I'll cut it. Leave me to deal with the fellow.'

And then the credulous Baronet, who wore his heart on his sleeve for all the daws he came in contact with to peck at, delivered himself of that pleasant sentence which annoyed Mr. Gayre more than he would have cared to acknowledge.

Sir Geoffrey had an absolute genius for 'finding out the raw,' and knew there was nothing under heaven that hurt Nicholas Gayre's vanity more keenly than associating him with the old Brunswick-square 'set.'

Resolutely the banker had for years held himself aloof from his father's connections. In the City he was considered proud, exclusive, and a genuine 'West-ender.' At the West-end, among acquaintances made during those blessed days when he served the Queen

and never thought of Lombard-street, save as a sort of gold mine, he was known as an officer who had won distinction and a banker who was 'rolling in money;' while both in the City and at the West-end people held him to be exceptionally respectable. And now, merely for the sake of a girl's brown eyes, he had voluntarily let himself drift into close companionship with one of the most disreputable men in England—gone to a party at which, a year before, he would not have been seen for any consideration; where dreadful people who were 'merely rich' felt themselves at liberty to call him 'Gayre,' and address him in a 'hail-fellow-well-met' manner inexpressibly galling; and, as if this was not sufficiently mortifying, on the top of all came Sir Geoffrey's statement, which he *knew to be true*, that Mr. Sudlow now believed socially his former Mentor stood very little higher than himself.

'It is always best to look matters straight in the face,' proceeded Sir Geoffrey, when he had got his cigar well alight. 'There's Peggy to be married, and Sudlow's the only man who has turned up we can marry her to. I hate the fellow, but what am I to do? Of course I must not let my own likes or dislikes interfere when the girl's happiness is at stake. It's a pity I can't find a husband for her in a decent rank of life; but it is no use fretting about that now. Well, the next thing to be done is—get the man up to the point. I don't intend to have him dangling about here, wasting the girl's time and trying my temper. You wouldn't believe what a confounded nuisance he is. Why, I have often to stop in, and lose perhaps the chance of some good thing, because he does not know when to go. It's all very

well for him, but we're no further forward than we were last June. I can't bear such dawdling. Gad! the fellow ought to snap at the chance of marrying a Baronet's daughter.'

'Apparently he is in no hurry to "snap,"' said Mr. Gayre, with ill-natured frankness.

'He will be in a hurry before he is much older, or I'll know the reason why,' remarked Sir Geoffrey, 'which brings me back to the point I started from. It is quite evident, Gayre, that under your management the matter makes no progress. Now I am going to take the conduct of affairs. I don't ask your help because I would rather play my game alone. Fact is,' finished the Baronet, 'the beggar must be brought to book, for I can't hold on in this way much longer. If I had not been pretty lucky the ball must have stopped rolling weeks ago; and I feel it deucedly provoking for so much of my hard-earned money (no man knows how hard I work) to go in keeping up this house. Were I alone, any attic at a few shillings a week would serve my turn. Besides, I have heard a word drop that young Moreby's mamma has found a wife for him; and if such is the case, you'll see this place will be sold, and then what's to become of poor Peggy? Mark my words—this place will be in the market ere long; you know how right all my intuitions are,' and Sir Geoffrey shook his head with the air of a man who believed there was not a cranny or crack in it unfilled by wisdom.

He had good reason, at any rate, for his belief concerning Mr. Moreby's villa, since the 'word dropped' assumed the shape of a letter from Mrs. Moreby's lawyer containing a plain intimation that the sooner he could find another

residence the better his client would be pleased.

Except in that trifling matter of paying ready money, or indeed any money at all, no one could complain of undue delay on the part of Sir Geoffrey. Were a horse to be bought or sold, a bet to be laid, a flat to be fleeced, or any other little business of pleasure or profit in hand, the Baronet was 'up to time'; and most certainly now he had decided 'some steps must be taken about poor Peggy,' he did not mean to let grass grow under his feet.

Accordingly next time Mr. Sudlow called, as of late he had got into the habit of doing, unaccompanied by his former friend and Mentor, he found the drawing-room unoccupied, and not the slightest sign of afternoon tea. On the contrary, the gipsy table, which might be regarded as the basis of operations, was put tidily away in one corner of the apartment; the chairs stood also in orthodox positions, and the stands and vases were destitute of flowers.

Mr. Sudlow stared about him bewildered. He had never before imagined the prettiest room in young Mr. Moreby's villa could look so cold and formal. The afternoon also was dull and depressing. No sunshine streamed across the tiny garden, and no fragrant logs burnt in the grate. 'Logs are deuced useful sort of things,' Sir Geoffrey was in the habit of sententially remarking.

On that especial day, however, at five o'clock P.M., affairs were chilling in the extreme; and as he stood by the window Mr. Sudlow shivered.

'Bah! what a place this must be in the winter,' he considered, 'with all that water flowing at the rate of about an inch an hour down below there!'

'How de-do?' said the Baronet,

appearing at this point in Mr. Sudlow's meditations, and greeting his daughter's admirer with friendly familiarity and two extended fingers. 'Bit raw, ain't it? Come into the next room—fire there; like a fire myself all the year round;' with which statement Sir Geoffrey conducted Mr. Sudlow into the adjoining apartment, where that gentleman found blazing logs and a strong smell of stimulants.

'I suppose we must consider the best of the weather's over now,' remarked the host as he threw on another billet.

Mr. Sudlow ventured to hope a fine day or two might still be expected, but Sir Geoffrey would not listen to the suggestion. 'We're in September now,' he said, 'and, faith! winter will be upon us before we can turn round.'

After that there ensued a pause. Sir Geoffrey was able, as a rule, to maintain a good even stream of talk, but neither man could be described as a brilliant conversationalist.

'What will you take, Sudlow?' asked the Baronet, inspired by a happy idea, sauntering towards the sideboard as he spoke.

Mr. Sudlow thanked Sir Geoffrey, but declined to take anything.

'It's a beast of a day,' said Sir Geoffrey, 'pon my soul it is; worse than if it was raining. Have something, man; I am sure you need picking up; I know I do.'

Firmly Mr. Sudlow, or, as the Baronet sometimes loved to describe him, that good young sneak, resisted the temptations and declined the blandishments of his ladye-love's papa. 'I never touch wine between meals,' he said, repeating a statement Sir Geoffrey had heard before at least fifty times.

'Gad, I envy you; I only wish I could do without it,' answered the Baronet; and to prove how imperatively necessary he found it to 'pick himself up,' he forthwith poured out and swallowed a tumbler of champagne, laced with what he called a mere touch of brandy.

Mr. Sudlow looked on during this performance, but spoke never a word; indeed, what word could he have spoken?

'I feel a new man,' said Sir Geoffrey, in that capacity strolling back to the hearth and critically scanning the last log he had thrown on. 'Do—take even a glass of sherry, Sudlow.'

But Sudlow only shook his head.

'Deuced chilly, I call it,' went on the Baronet, settling himself in the depths of an armchair and stretching out his long legs towards the fire. 'Well, and what mischief have you been up to since I saw you last?'

'Not much,' answered the lively suitor, who detested Sir Geoffrey's jokes, and yet did not well know how to take offence at them. 'How is Miss Chelston?'

'O, she's all right,' was the reply—'packing.'

'Packing!' repeated Mr. Sudlow.

'Yes; of late days she's had unfortunately to manage without a maid, poor girl; so she's doing the best she can, with the help of Mrs. Lavender. They've been at it all day; but I'm afraid to inquire progress.'

'Is Miss Chelston, then—'

'She's going out of town,' finished the Baronet, with kindly consideration; 'and, faith, I'm very glad she is, though I don't exactly know what I am to do here all by myself—you'll take pity upon me, and look in often, won't you?—for the girl has been

too long cooped up, losing all her colour, and so forth.'

'Is she likely to remain away for any length of time?' asked Mr. Sudlow.

'Can't tell, I'm sure, what she'll do when she gets among her friends—go the round of them, I suppose. I'll not bid her come back to North Bank, you may be sure, while she keeps well and is enjoying herself elsewhere. In the length and breadth of England I suppose there is not so unselfish a father as myself.'

Mr. Sudlow murmured some remark under his breath, which Sir Geoffrey chose to accept as complimentary; for, after repeating his statement in different and more comprehensive terms—viz. that when another person's interests were to be considered, he never thought of 'Geoffrey Chelston'—he remained for a short time looking at the fire with a pensive and satisfied expression of countenance.

With more courage than might have been expected under the circumstances, Mr. Sudlow essayed a few commonplace observations; to all of which Sir Geoffrey replied heartily, yet in a manner which suggested to the visitor his mind was wandering elsewhere.

'Is there any chance of my having the pleasure of seeing Miss Chelston this afternoon?' ventured the lover at last.

The Baronet laughed.

'My good fellow,' he said, 'it would be as much as my place is worth to ask such a thing. My daughter can't endure to be seen unless she's in parade dress, every bow and brooch and hairpin in its proper place. Funny girl! Now she's in her dressing-gown I wouldn't like to beg for a two minutes' interview myself.'

'I did not mean to intrude, of course; I only wished— But

perhaps you will kindly tell Miss Chelston I trust she may have an "extremely pleasant journey."'

'I don't know much about the journey,' answered Sir Geoffrey; 'but she's certain to have a good time when she gets to the end of it. Much obliged to you, I'm sure. I'll say all that's proper and civil. What, must you go? Can't you spare me even a few minutes more? No? Well, I'll walk with you to the gate. By the bye, I saw you the other day, though you did not see me.'

'Indeed! May I ask where?'

'In Meridian-square. You were pottering about! Had I seen any one to mind my horse I'd have got down to ask what the deuce was possessing you to hold a house-to-house visitation in a neighbourhood like that. The whole population must have been at one-o'clock dinner, I think. At any rate, there were mingled odours of fish, onions, bacon, and cabbage, and not one of the aborigines visible. You *are* in a hurry! Good-day. Look in as often as you can. Good-afternoon!' And the Baronet, as he shut the gate after Mr. Sudlow, slowly closed one eye with a waggish expression of such infinite, if silent, amusement, that it really seemed a pity there was no one at hand with whom he could share the excellent joke evidently in progress.

'Sulk away, my friend,' soliloquised the Baronet. 'The more you sulk the better I shall be pleased. You've had two or three nasty falls this afternoon, or I'm much mistaken. Perhaps for the future Jack will think twice before he again feels quite so certain he is as good as his master.'

'So your niece is not at home,' suggested Mr. Sudlow to the banker the first time he was fortunate enough to meet that gentleman.

'Where is she, then?' asked Mr. Gayre.

'Gone out of town.'

'O! Gone for how long?'

'I do not know—not till she has finished the round of all her friends, as I understand.'

Secretly Mr. Gayre reflected that Miss Peggy's absence would not prove of long duration if it depended on that contingency; but he only said,

'Well, you see, Sudlow, you and I are the only people left in town. Soon I shall be the last rose—for you doubtless mean to take your departure shortly.'

'Yes, I think I shall get away for a while,' agreed Mr. Sudlow. 'I never remember so slow a season.'

'Take comfort; it is over, at any rate.'

'Which way are you going, Mr. Gayre?'

'If you had asked me two minutes ago I should have said to North Bank; but as my niece is not there the journey would be useless. Sir Geoffrey is sure to be out.'

'He has not left town,' said Mr. Sudlow, in an aggrieved tone.

'Now his daughter is gone you may be very sure he won't stop long behind. I understood him to say some time ago he was only staying on her account.'

'I suppose,' remarked Mr. Sudlow ruefully, 'he has plenty of friends always ready to invite him.'

'Possibly, probably; but I really have no information on the subject.'

'I daresay now he'll be going to some great place in the country to shoot.'

'He may; I do not know.'

'If I could speak French well I'd go abroad,' said Mr. Sudlow a little inconsequently; 'but it is such a nuisance to be in a foreign country, and experience a difficulty

about even asking for a glass of water.'

'If Sir Geoffrey were here he would advise you to get over that by never asking for a glass of water;' with which easy observation Mr. Gayre managed to end the dialogue and betake himself to Wimpole-street, whence he despatched a note to his brother-in-law, asking 'What have you done with Margaret?'

During the course of the following day back came Sir Geoffrey's reply:

'Dear Gayre,—Don't you trouble your head about Peggy. She is out of town, staying with friends—that is what Peggy is doing; and she is going to remain out of town for the present. As for myself, now I have that anxiety off my mind, I intend running down to Snatchwell's place in Staffordshire to have a turn among the long-tails. You had better come too. Lots of game; pleasant house to stop at; colourless wife, with no harm or good about her; excellent cellar; host who likes his guests to enjoy themselves. Snatchwell would have been just the husband for Peggy—son of an ironmaster, or something of that sort, who left him a large fortune. But then, you see, there's Mrs. S.; and even for Peggy I don't feel disposed to bring myself to the gallows. If you like to look up any evening you name, shall be glad to see you; but the place is all, after a manner, done up in holland and brown paper, and there are no servants except Sweet Lavender.—Yours,
G. C.

'Think about Staffordshire.'

'Then she is really out of town,' decided Mr. Gayre. 'I scarcely believed it. Who *can* he have found to take charge of her?'

CHAPTER XVI.

LANDED.

SEPTEMBER had come and gone. Spite of Sir Geoffrey's gloomy prophecies concerning an early winter, that year summer, as if loth to part company with everything fair and beautiful, lingered in England till even in late November such a blue and sunshiny sky looked down on mead and stream and copse as often fails to gladden the eye in rose-laden and leafy June. It was October—a dry glorious October, with leaves turning red and yellow and brown and russet on the trees, when the cones hung long on the pines, and late pears and apples and plums shone mellow on the espaliers; and there was just enough of chilliness in the autumn air to make a fire pleasant, and the country looked its very best, and the stubble gleamed golden in the bright sunshine, and sportsmen winding through woods only just beginning to get somewhat bare and thin of foliage gave animation to almost every sylvan landscape.

The Warren was looking enchanting. Down in the plantations there was an autumnal rustle and scent; but immediately around the cottage it might still have been July, so firm was the turf, so fair the lawns, so bright the gardens, so gay the verandah, with flower and leaf and berry; whilst as for Mrs. Jubbins, the gladness of Nature seemed reflected in her face.

So happy and good a season the widow had never known. The glory of an Indian summer was streaming across her life just as the sunshine lay golden upon the Kentish fields. Three, often four, days a week Mr. Gayre now spent at her house.

Ostensibly he came to shoot;

but then he might have found far more pheasants, far finer sport, elsewhere. Were not great houses open to him? Had not grand and notable persons asked for the pleasure of his company at their country seats? It was optional with him, she knew, whether he chose to chase 'the wild deer and follow the roe' in Scotland, or kill a stray rabbit on his lordship's fifteen-acre lot. For him the rivers of Ireland danced and glittered in vain, the Yorkshire moors held no charm, the stately hospitality of great men's houses presented no temptation.

At last, thought the widow, after the years, the long patient years, of waiting, he had become quite one of the family; and by Christmas perhaps—who could tell?—the day might be settled when, the last drop of bitterness extracted from her cup, she should exchange the name of Jubbins for that of Gayre. As regarded the banker himself, she felt he had grown too delightful; while still superior to all created beings, he was yet more human, more accessible, less cynical. He took the keenest interest in Ida's equestrian exercises; he talked to the boys about their future—he was very earnest that one at least of them should pursue the path Mr. Jubbins had trod before.

When he spoke about 'oil' it seemed to the widow that product became nectar. Attar of roses never smelt sweeter than rank sperm or olive when purified by Mr. Gayre's clever tongue.

At last he was identifying his interests with hers—'taking notice' of her children, advising her—not coldly, but as one who took a pleasure in the subject as to their future; and all this had come to pass since she left Brunswick-square and migrated to Chislehurst.

Blessed Chislehurst! blessed Warren! thrice-blessed Lady Merioneth! As she paced the rooms once trodden by that noble personage, as her feet pressed the carpets once honoured by the footsteps of nobility, and looked out of the windows on the woods for which her money paid, but in which Mr. Gayre shot, the widow forgot to remember she had been Higgs and was Jubbins—forgot everything in heaven and on earth save that she believed at length her long fealty was to be rewarded, and that ere long she would be solemnly asked whether she Eliza would take this man Nicholas for better and for worse.

Poor Mrs. Jubbins! Men were deceitful ever; and Mr. Gayre only made the few pheasants and rabbits he ever 'potted' at The Warren an excuse for hearing tidings of Susan Drummond.

Since the great party they had met thrice—twice at Chislehurst, once at Enfield, whither Mr. Gayre repaired with a message (which might just as well have been sent on a post-card) from Sir Geoffrey.

It struck him Mrs. Arbery was not particularly delighted with his visit, and that Susan seemed a little anxious and *distracted*; but when next she walked with him round and about The Warren he could see no difference in her, save that she had grown more sweet and beautiful than of yore. When would Sir Geoffrey and his daughter return to London? That was the only question Mr. Gayre now accounted to be of any real importance. Politics were to him as vanity, and the state of the money market a matter of supreme indifference. He could not propose to Susan at The Warren, where his most telling sentence might be spoilt by a shout from one of Mrs. Jubbins' untrained

and ill-mannered cubs. It was equally impossible to say what he wanted to say out at Enfield, under the eye of Mrs. Arbery. No; he had decided the when and the where his declaration should take place, if Heaven only so ordained matters that his brother-in-law and niece returned to North Bank before all sunshine departed. He knew the very spot in the Regent's Park where he meant to lay all he had of value on earth at her dear feet. He would entice her there, and before those wonderful brown eyes lay his heart bare.

He had thought the whole affair out; there was nothing to conceal, nothing of which he need be ashamed. It was for her sake only he had sought out his relations, for whom he was now prepared to do a great deal. Her will should be his law. Aught a man may do he was ready to essay, if only she would lay her hand in his and say, 'We will walk through life together.'

Occasionally perhaps he felt a twinge or two concerning Mrs. Jubbins; but if a woman likes to deceive herself, is a man to blame? Mr. Gayre felt Miss Drummond was not likely to censure him greatly for not asking the widow in marriage.

Susan moved among the City people; but she was not of them. She had scarcely a thought in common with the bulk of the persons Mrs. Jubbins knew. She was good to Ida, tolerant towards the boys; but O! and O! what a gulf, long and wide and deep, worn by centuries of culture and thought and breeding, lay between her and the rich dowagers who 'condescended' to exchange a few words with Mrs. Jubbins' young friend, as she fussed about the place, getting a book for one, a few flowers for another, a cushion

for a third—‘making yourself cheap,’ so Miss Chelston once truly and indignantly remarked—a thing, by the way, Miss Chelston was never likely to do.

As for Mr. Sudlow, he was wandering to and fro upon the earth like a perturbed spirit. He had gone to every usual and unusual seaside resort within a reasonable distance of London, and nowhere found Miss Chelston, either in the flesh or in the visitors’ list. She had vanished, and nobody apparently, except her father, knew whither; Mr. Gayre did not, or Lavender, or Mrs. Lavender, or the housemaid, or Mrs. Jubbins, or Miss Drummond. Mr. Sudlow had tried them all, openly and craftily; but it is impossible to tell what one doesn’t know, and the suitor could only, by dint of trouble and time and scheming, extract at the last the answer he had received at the first.

‘Miss Chelston was out of town with some friends.’ Nobody could tell when she would return, nobody seemed to know whether she would ever return; nobody was able to throw the smallest light on Sir Geoffrey’s plans for the future, save that there seemed some idea of giving up Mr. Moreby’s box at Christmas.

‘And I did hear a word let drop, sir,’ said Mrs. Lavender, smoothing down her apron, ‘that very likely Miss Chelston might winter abroad with a relation of Sir Geoffrey’s,’ which revelation was in acknowledgment of a sovereign pressed into the worthy woman’s hand. Had she vouchsafed this information at first instead of at last, she would never have received that twenty shillings sterling coin of the realm.

‘Dem!’ said Mr. Sudlow, as he flung himself away, leaving poor Mrs. Lavender utterly amazed. ‘Dem!’

Clearly if Sir Geoffrey failed to understand many good things, he had a perfect comprehension of such a nature as that possessed by the son-in-law he hoped to secure.

‘Dem!’ said that worthy, which monosyllabic curse meant he felt he must now take action.

‘And he went out of that there gate,’ said Mrs. Lavender to her spouse, ‘and tore down the road as if he were a dog with a tin kettle tied to his tail!’

A week later, Mr. Gayre had but just finished dinner, and was in the act of filling himself a glass of claret, when the door opened, and, unexpected and unannounced, Sir Geoffrey Chelston made his appearance.

‘I know you don’t care to see me in your house,’ began the Baronet, directly the first greetings were over; ‘I must be a confounded deal less sharp than I am if I failed to know that. But under the circumstances I thought you would not mind. *Sudlow has proposed.*’

‘No!’ exclaimed Mr. Gayre.

‘Fact, my dear boy, and a deuce of a time he has been about it, in my opinion. If I had not packed Peggy bag and baggage out of town, we should never have got him up to the point. Yes, five days ago I was staying with a young fellow in Norfolk, who has just come into fifteen thousand a year and some splendid shooting—gracious Heavens, only to think of the luck every one seems to have but myself!—when a letter arrived, forwarded on from my club. It was from our friend, asking my permission, wanting to pay his addresses, and all the rest of the business; a very proper sort of epistle altogether, except that, apparently, he had forgotten all about money matters; at any rate, he said nothing on the

subject. So I wrote back from Antler Castle a diplomatic little letter, thanking him for the honour he did my daughter and myself; but intimating it was not exactly the alliance I desired. I didn't say what I wanted, but I made him feel he was scarcely in the rank—you understand.'

Mr. Gayre did. The charming Baronet had pursued precisely the same tactics in his own case he was now practising on behalf of his daughter; but it was not necessary to go into that question, so the banker only said,

'Did he write again?'

'No, *he came*. By the greatest piece of good fortune, Dashdale—that's my friend, you know—happened to be at the station with tandem dog-cart, livery-servants, and everything likely to impress an out-and-out cad like Sudlow, when he heard that individual inquiring how he could get to Antler Castle. "Who is it you want there?" asks Dashdale—a deuced ready off-hand sort of fellow Dashdale. "Sir Geoffrey Chelston," says Sudlow. "You're not a dun, I hope!" cries Dashdale, between fun and earnest. Sudlow, I believe, got very red, and said, "No, he wasn't a dun." "Jump up, then," says Dashdale; "give him his head; stand clear, there." And before Sudlow was well settled in his seat, as sweet a pair of bays as ever you clapped eyes on were spanking along the road at a pace which took away our friend's breath.

"If you believe me," says Dashdale, the "cockney held on—held on, by ——!"

'Well?' asked Mr. Gayre.

'Dashdale—most deuced hospitable man—made him stop for dinner, stop the night, stop for breakfast, stop for luncheon, and then ordered round the brougham and sent him over to the station.

"Any friend of my friend Chelston," said Dashdale, "is welcome to anything I can do for him." If I had coughed him up Dashdale could not have played into my hands better. Of course, in a house like that, Sudlow got a glimpse of the usages of decent society. Thank God, I am no snob. I would just as soon eat a crust of bread-and-cheese at a wayside pub as dine off silver; still, I confess I was glad that, for once, Sudlow should see the sort of thing I had been accustomed to. There was not much bounce left in him when he asked me for half an hour's conversation in the library.'

'And the end of it all?' inquired Sir Geoffrey's patient auditor.

'I'm coming to that. He wanted my daughter; what was my objection to him? I said, "General rather than particular. I looked for something beyond mere wealth in a husband;" and I fooled him into believing Dashdale might suit me for a son-in-law, as, indeed, he would, only he's engaged to his cousin, a girl with the wickedest pair of eyes, and the sauciest smile, and the best seat across country you'd desire to see.'

'Yes,' said Mr. Gayre.

No revelation the Baronet could make would have surprised his relative!

'That arrow stuck. "You see," I said, "you are *only* rich." "Surely it is something to be rich!" he urged. "Of course I agreed to that; but then a great deal more is needed. In our rank we look for other things besides money. I am a great advocate," I went on, "for people marrying in their own set. A girl like my daughter would be miserable if asked to associate with persons beneath her."

"I should not ask her to do anything of the sort," he declared.

"I do not know," I said. "I have noticed a tendency in you to think people great and grand merely because they have so many thousands a year. In your estimation, if I may say so without offence, a lord mayor is an individual to be cultivated. Personally—though I am not in the least prejudiced—I would rather not associate with lord mayors, and I certainly don't intend to let my daughter associate with them. You have forced me to speak plainly," I finished; "and now no offence being, I hope, given, take my advice, and look out for some City heiress." And with that I rose to end the conversation.

'It would have ended with me at a much earlier period,' said Mr. Gayre. 'How you can be so intolerably rude, Chelston, passes my understanding.'

'Rude! I am particularly polite. I didn't "confound his impudence!" or bluster about my family. I was obliged to show him where he had gone wrong, but I tried to spare his feelings as much as possible. However, he would not let me go. He was willing to do everything in his power. A golden key would unlock the door into almost any society nowadays; and, with his money and my daughter's beauty, birth, and breeding, he thought—he felt sure, indeed—there would be no difficulty in getting into the very first circles.

"Make no mistake about that," I said. "Society is not a theatre, where you have only to pay your money and walk into the stalls. Besides, what earthly reason have you to suppose my daughter would marry you? Has she shown the slightest partiality for you?"

'Well, he could not say she had.

Still, he thought he might have a chance if I would only give him opportunity; and I let him talk on and on, and at last overpersuade me into giving a sort of reluctant and conditional consent to his writing to Peggie. He wanted to see her, but I would not allow that. "I can't have the girl harassed as you have harassed me," I told him. "She is a timid sort of creature, and it hurts her, I know, to give pain so much, she would be just as likely as not to say 'Yes' when she wanted to say 'No.'"

'Then he entreated me not to prejudice her against him. "Honour bright," I promised; "if I say nothing in your favour I'll say nothing in your disfavour;" and he was going to end with that, when I remarked, "O, by the bye, before we go any further we had better understand each other about one thing—*settlements*."

Mr. Gayre smiled cynically, but Sir Geoffrey did not choose to see that smile.

'Would you believe,' he said, 'the beggar did not want to make any settlements; so we had a very stiff ten minutes before I could make the least impression on him. "He did not approve of settlements." "Very well, then," I said, "you don't propose to my daughter." "Whatever the amount of her fortune might be, he would settle a similar sum." "Then," I said, "you don't propose to my daughter." "He would settle three hundred a year." "O no," I said, "you don't propose to my daughter. Hang it, sir!" I went on, "have you come here to insult me? You've nothing *but* money to throw into the scale; and, by Heaven, if you don't throw in a good lot of that, wife of yours daughter of mine shall never be! Do you think I am going to have my only child left at the tender

mercies of any husband? No, no, Mr. Sudlow, you have deceived yourself. I am not as simple as I look. I have not lived fifty years in this wicked world for nothing. And if my daughter marries, she shall marry as befits her station. Settlements liberal and all in order—good establishment—plenty of servants—carriage—everything in the best style—money no object whatever. Now you know my views, and there is an end of the matter.”

‘And Mr. Sudlow—’

‘Your friend accepted the inevitable. ’Pon my soul, there are people who like you the better for thrashing them. When I found out my gentleman’s game I did not spare him, and now he is as tractable as you please. He has my permission to write to Peggy through me, and I have told her she is not to take him at first, but that she must take him at last. I wish they could have been married immediately, but that’s impossible. He has to find a house *she* likes, buy furniture *she* approves, select the carriage *she* prefers (if he behaves himself I’ll give them a pair of horses such as you don’t often see), make settlements to be approved by *my* solicitors. Gad! when you think of it, Gayre, marriage is an awful thing for a man. Then, on the other hand, Peggy must provide a *trousseau*—not a mere makeshift sort of business, but the best money can buy; and afterwards comes the worst difficulty of all—what are we to do with the girl in the period between the time she is engaged and married? There is only one person I can think of fit to matronise her. I must see Susan Drummond on the subject. She can help me in that quarter, I know.’

‘Do you think of going over to Enfield, then?’ asked Mr. Gayre.

‘To Enfield! Not I, faith! I am not so fond of cold water, old women, and sour looks as all that comes to. I’ll just drop Susan a line, and ask her to run over and see me as soon as ever she can. We must take time by the forelock now, or else time may reverse the operation.’

‘But you don’t suppose Miss Drummond will run over, as you call it, to see you?’

‘Won’t she? Ah, you don’t bet; if you did, I’d lay long odds Susan will come at any inconvenience to herself. You don’t know Susan—that’s flat, my lad. And now I must go, and you will be very glad to see my back. It’s a queer world, too. Only to think of the Chelstons and the Gayres, and the Chelstons and the Sudlows!’ Having delivered himself of which suggested parable, Sir Geoffrey, after stigmatising claret as cold unhealthy stuff, which thinned the blood and destroyed the digestion, poured himself out a tumbler of Mr. Gayre’s rare vintage, and swallowing it with a wry face, as though it were medicine, walked out of the house with a gravity of demeanour and steadiness of gait which deceived Mr. Gayre’s servant into believing the Baronet was soberer than any judge.

For one rash moment Mr. Gayre had felt tempted to declare Miss Drummond should not be at his brother-in-law’s beck and call, that it was monstrous to ask the girl to come to North Bank even for ten minutes during his niece’s absence; but the next, caution won the day; only he resolved that upon the very first opportunity which offered he would try to gain a right to stop all that sort of thing.

But then, good Heavens! if Susan married him she would be Sir Geoffrey’s sister-in-law; and this seemed so utterly monstrous an idea that Mr. Gayre had, spite

of his own will, to sit down and consider the complication of relationship which would ensue.

Aunt to Marguerite and Mr. Sudlow and the Minor Canonesses, sister-in-law to the Canoness and Canon Gayre! The banker felt quite disheartened.

'There ought to be some law passed to relieve people of these liabilities,' he considered; and then he decided to haunt North Bank till he heard when Susan might be expected to pay that extraordinary visit suggested quite as a matter of course by Sir Geoffrey, if indeed she ever paid it at all.

CHAPTER XVII.

BETWEEN WIND AND WATER.

'I ASKED you to come over in a way our worthy friend here evidently considers extremely free and easy, that I might get ten minutes' uninterrupted chat with you. We've known each other too long to stand on ceremony, eh, Susan?'

'I should think so indeed,' answered Miss Drummond, but the colour rushed into her face as she spoke.

'What on earth,' wondered Mr. Gayre, 'can make the girl blush so painfully at times, while on other occasions she does not seem to have a drop of tell-tale blood in her body?'

'Can you tell me where Miss Matthews is to be found?'

'She is living out at Shepherd's Bush,' answered Susan.

'There, I felt sure you could help me out of the wood. How is she off?'

'Not very well, I fear,' was the reply.

'All the better for my purpose,' said the Baronet gaily. 'Sorry, of course, on her account, and all that,' he went on; 'but if she is

not overburdened with this world's goods she may be the more inclined to let bygones be bygones.'

Susan shook her head gravely. 'What is it you want her to do?' she asked.

'Come here for three months, and I'll make it worth her while.'

'I am afraid,' said Miss Drummond, pursing up her pretty mouth till it was like nothing so much as a sweet pink rosebud; then meeting Sir Geoffrey's eye, her lips opened, and she broke into a sudden and irresistible peal of laughter, in which the Baronet himself joined heartily.

'Faith, it seemed no joking matter at the time, Sue,' he said, as soon as he could speak; 'and there's Gayre wondering what the deuce we are laughing at.'

'I can guess,' remarked Mr. Gayre, with a poor semblance of merriment.

The three were at luncheon together. Mrs. Lavender had what she called tossed up a very pretty repast, over which Sir Geoffrey Chelston, clothed, shaved, and as sober as his previous night's doings would permit, presided. That luncheon was indeed his breakfast, and with the aid of several highly-seasoned and savoury dishes, assisted by strong cordials, he was trying to get that troublesome stomach of his into good temper.

'Have a glass of sherry, Susan, do,' entreated the Baronet. 'Capital sherry this. Now I want you to coax Miss Matthews to come and take charge of the house for three months. I am sure she would do anything for you.'

'I do not think she would do that,' answered Susan, with an attempt at gravity creditable under the circumstances.

'Not if I promised to be a good boy and behave myself? She need not fear any recurrence of the indiscretion. Deuce take the

girl! what's she laughing at now?

'O Mr. Gayre,' panted out Susan, 'if you could only see Miss Matthews!'

'He need not wish to see her, I'm sure. Touch of the tar-brush about her complexion, and figure indescribable. But fact is, Gayre, I did offend Miss Matthews—as conscientious a woman as ever entered the house. An excellent person, but most confoundedly ugly—perhaps that was the reason she was good. There is no merit in ugly people being virtuous. I can't think what the deuce possessed me; or rather—I know, it was some of the worst whisky that ever came out of a cheating innkeeper's cellar. But she needn't have made such a fuss about the matter. If she ever looked in her glass she must have been perfectly sure what I did was committed in a moment of mental aberration. Never previously,' finished the Baronet, 'in the course of a long and, I may add, comparatively sinless life, did I so far forget myself.'

'She would not have minded it so much, I am sure,' interposed Susan, 'if Dottrell had not chanced unfortunately to come into the room.'

'Where, if you believe me, Gayre, on my sacred word of honour, I was making that worthy lady read a measure like *Young Lochinvar*. I must have been confoundedly drunk; not with the quantity, only with the quality, of what I had taken. And when I got home and found the old girl in the drawing-room, I believe I chucked her under the chin, and insisted she should dance a minuet with me. She declared I kissed her, too; and I daresay I did, for I was quite off my head. As a matter of choice, I wouldn't have done such a

thing in my sober senses for a thousand pounds; and then, in the middle of the performance, Dottrell, our then butler, appeared on the scene.

'She appealed to him for protection, and straightway opened out on me. I sat down for the simple reason that I could not stand, and she did hold forth. Father Mathew and Mrs. Grundy together could not have hatched up such a discourse. She would have gone on till now, only Dottrell calmly remarking, "You had better come away, ma'am: Sir Geoffrey does not understand a word you're saying;" with firm decision took hold of her arm and marched her out of the room.'

'And the next morning?' questioned Mr. Gayre, who now began to understand more thoroughly than ever the reason why Sir Geoffrey found his domestic affairs somewhat difficult to manage.

'The next morning Dottrell woke me of a sound sleep in order to deliver a letter from Miss Matthews.

"Put it down," I growled, for I had such a headache I could scarcely open my eyes.

"Beg pardon, Sir Geoffrey, but Miss Matthews wants to catch the 11.25 train, and—"

"Let her catch her train, and be blanked to her!" I said, settling down again, for I had clean forgotten all about that last night's minuet. But it was of no use. Dottrell proved too much for me, and I had to sit up and face the matter.

"Won't she take an apology?" I asked.

'No, she wouldn't; all she meant to take was her salary and departure. But now, look here, Susan. You tell her I'm a reformed character; and that I'm

never at home till morning ; and that you'll go bail for my good conduct ; and that Peggy, who is now quite grown up, and a dragon of propriety, keeps me on my best manners ; and that she shall have fifty pounds for the three months, paid in advance. She'll come then, bless you ! she'll come. If she should want any further guarantee, refer her to Gayre. He'll tell her the man never lived who had a greater respect for elderly women than myself. Why, rather than offend one of them, I'd keep out of their way for ever.'

It was too much. Even Mr. Gayre had to laugh, as if he saw some fun in the Baronet's utterances, while Susan faithfully promised she would say all she could in Sir Geoffrey Chelston's favour.

'And you'll say it this afternoon, won't you?' he entreated, 'because time happens to mean money to me just now.'

To this arrangement Susan at first demurred a little. The afternoon would be far advanced before she could get to Shepherd's Bush. Miss Matthews might not be at home. Mrs. Arbery would certainly feel uneasy. But each of these points Sir Geoffrey combated, and she yielded ; the while Mr. Gayre sat inwardly fuming at the way his brother-in-law made use of the girl, and the manner she allowed herself to be so treated. Mr. Gayre failed to see the beauty of making oneself cheap. He could not understand that the moment Susan began to think she was of too much importance to answer to the beck and call of those she cared for, she would cease to be Susan Drummond, and become a totally different person.

'If you are going by the Metropolitan,' said the Baronet, by way of conclusion, 'we can walk

together as far as Baker-street. Will you come with us, Gayre ?'

Almost gnashing his teeth, Mr. Gayre said he would. Where was now his chance of speaking to Susan ? He felt at his wits' end. He did not know what to do. Should he write ? Should he go down to Enfield, or wait his opportunity, or—

'This is your hat, Gayre,' cried Sir Geoffrey, interrupting his meditations ; 'and here is Susan. I always did say I never saw a girl who could put on her bonnet as fast as you. However, as you know, a "bonny bride is soon buskit," which reminds me that I am to be father, and give you away some day. You remember our compact ?'

'Very well indeed ; and I will hold you to your promise,' answered Susan, blushing as she spoke.

And then, as Mr. Gayre held the door open for her to pass out, he wondered to himself what on earth his lady-love could see in such a reprobate as Sir Geoffrey to laugh and make merry with him, and smile on his battered wicked face, as though it were pure as that of an angel.

Nevertheless, they were a pleasant trio as they walked to Baker-street ; and Mr. Gayre, after he had got Susan's ticket and seen her into the train, he, Sir Geoffrey, accompanying the lady on to the platform per favour—lamented his own want of daring in failing to take a ticket also to Shepherd's Bush.

But if there is a 'divinity which doth hedge a king,' there is a higher divinity which hedges a modest, innocent woman. Not for all the world would Mr. Gayre then have so timed his proposal as to hurt the girl's self-respect, and daunt her fearless self reliance.

'She has no business to be running about London in this way by herself,' he thought; but he felt he dared not be the man to teach Susan Drummond she was doing wrong.

Next morning's post brought a note to North Bank saying Miss Matthews utterly declined to accept Sir Geoffrey's offer; but she—Susan, the writer—had met, at the house of Margaret's ex-governess, a lady willing to enter upon the duties he required at once.

'I am sure she is just the person you would like,' finished the fair scribe; '*not young*' ('Good Lord!' groaned Sir Geoffrey), 'a widow' ('Ware hawks, but she can't catch me,' considered the juvenile Baronet); 'rather nice-looking and pleasant-mannered' ('That's a bit of comfort'); 'has a grandson she wants to keep at school' ('Then she must be out of her teens, at any rate'); 'and seems to be in all respects the sort of person you require. I enclose her address.'

To which Sir Geoffrey replied:

'You settle with her, my dear Susan. Anything you say I'll stick to. If she can come into residence before the week is out, so much the better.'

Upon which authority, it may be assumed, Miss Drummond acted forthwith, since Mr. Gayre was duly and truly informed 'an elderly party was coming to keep things straight at North Bank.'

'She'll be a deuce of a nuisance, I know,' finished the Baronet; 'but we must have something of the sort. Those few days I had to stay at home and play propriety after the Chislehurst spread nearly killed me. Besides, my time is my money; and it wouldn't pay me to play the part of Mrs. Propriety. Once Peggy has given a sort of modified consent, she

shall come home; and I've asked Susan to tear herself away from the delights of Enfield, and stay with us for a while to brighten up the house.'

It was not long ere Mr. Sudlow won a reluctant and dignified acceptance from Miss Chelston.

'She feels she scarcely knows enough of me yet,' explained Mr. Sudlow to Mr. Gayre; 'but even that looks well, does it not?' asked the happy lover, invading the sanctity of Upper Wimpolestreet one morning before Mr. Gayre had finished his breakfast. 'She would not have said so much if she had not intended taking me some time, would she?'

Declining to commit himself to any positive statement, Mr. Gayre nevertheless admitted he thought his niece must, at all events, be entertaining the idea of Mr. Sudlow as a husband.

'I am afraid Sir Geoffrey will be very hard to deal with on the subject of settlements,' ventured Mr. Sudlow.

'Time enough for you to consider that question when you have arranged matters with my niece.'

'You know I object to settlements—'

'So I remember you said before; and we need not go over that old ground again. Keep your objections for Sir Geoffrey. It is his daughter, not mine, you hope to marry.'

What Mr. Sudlow wanted to know was whether Mr. Gayre meant to behave handsomely on the occasion. Five thousand pounds, he hinted to Sir Geoffrey, would not empty the Lombard-street coffers, while it might prove of material assistance in the house-keeping battle; but the Baronet warned him off this treacherous ground.

'Gayre is a deuced odd sort of

fellow,' he said; 'and if he is going to give anything, he'll give it without being asked—perhaps slip a *dot* into his niece's hand when she is going away to change her dress. But a certain person, who shall be nameless, couldn't get sixpence out of him unless he took the notion. Our best plan is to let him alone.'

Which was all very well for the Baronet, considered Mr. Sudlow; but not so well for the person undertaking to board, lodge, and dress the beautiful Marguerite for the remainder of her days.

'You see it is not as if Miss Chelston had a fortune in her own right,' ventured Mr. Sudlow at last.

Mr. Gayre looked at him and smiled.

'I suspect,' said the banker, 'if Miss Chelston had possessed a fortune in her own right, or in right of anybody else, Sir Geoffrey would not have bestowed it on you. Take my advice—if you get youth and beauty, and birth and breeding, don't break your heart because there is not money too. You could not have got one of the four in the person of my niece but for the folly of Sir Geoffrey Chelston, formerly of Chelston Pleasaunce.'

'You seem to consider my wealth nothing.'

'On the contrary, it is your wealth which has given you the chance of marrying my niece; and when you are married to her I hope you will live in a manner befitting her rank and her means. And for Heaven's sake, Sudlow,' added Mr. Gayre, with sudden energy, 'give up collecting your own rents. Dunning weekly tenants is scarcely an employment suitable for a man whose wife may one day hope to be presented at Court.'

Mr. Sudlow turned pink and

scarlet, and blue and crimson, in about as many seconds; and his moustache quivered as he asked,

'Who told you I did anything of the kind?'

'Sir Geoffrey. He says he saw you doing it. And now do take a word of advice. Your social future is before you to make or to mar, and, what is of a great deal more importance to me, my niece's future can be made or marred by you. If you mean to continue to do these sort of things say so, and the matter shall be broken off at once. It is quite competent for you to lower yourself; but my niece shall not be pulled down to your level. Why, in Heaven's name, don't you sell all that wretched property, and try to put your many talents out to interest in some way befitting a gentleman instead of a cad?'

'Whenever you can prove your ability to introduce me to really good society,' retorted Mr. Sudlow, 'I will follow your advice. Meantime permit me to say I do not consider the persons I find you know most intimately are in any respect superior to myself.'

'You had better repeat that statement to Sir Geoffrey Chelston,' said Mr. Gayre, 'and ascertain his opinions on the subject. I was wrong to interfere in the matter. It does not much signify to me whom his daughter marries, or whether she ever marries at all.'

With which explicit statement Mr. Gayre rose, and would have ended the conference, but that Mr. Sudlow, with profuse apologies, begged him to overlook his little ebullition of temper.

'You are hard on a fellow, you know,' he finished. 'You delight in catching me up and twitting me for taking care of my money; though you would be the first to

find fault if I squandered what my father left me.'

'But for my grandfather your father would not have had much to leave,' answered Mr. Gayre.

And then the talk drifted away from the dangerous question of rank to the surer ground of money, and peace seemed restored by the time Mr. Gayre announced his intention of starting for the City; and Mr. Sudlow asked him to come round by Bond-street, as he wished to buy a ring, and desired the benefit of his experience.

'I do not profess to be any judge of jewelry,' answered Mr. Gayre; 'but I will accompany you with pleasure, though I consider your purchase somewhat premature. However, if the ring is never possessed by my niece, it will do for some other young lady; only there is the loss of interest to consider, Sudlow.'

'I don't care a straw about that,' declared Mr. Sudlow valiantly. 'Once your niece says yes, and if only those confounded settlements can be arranged, I shall be the happiest man in England.'

'That's what they all say before marriage,' commented Mr. Gayre, searching about for his umbrella.

They were just turning into Vere-street as a cab pulled up opposite Marshall & Snellgrove's. Before the driver could get down, a gloved small hand turned the handle, and in a second the owner of that hand was on the pavement, and helping another lady to descend more slowly, if not more surely.

'Why, it is Miss Drummond!' exclaimed Mr. Sudlow; then he stopped; for the flash of glad surprise in Mr. Gayre's face, and the eager step made involuntarily forward, were revelations more extraordinary than welcome. A man could scarcely have clapped

hands during the fraction of time it required to make the banker's secret plain reading to Mr. Sudlow; and then both gentlemen were raising their hats and greeting Susan, and remarking how extremely strange it was they should have met.

The cabman duly paid and discharged, Miss Drummond introduced the banker and his companion to Miss Matthews, during the progress of which ceremony it tried even Mr. Gayre's gravity to look upon the highly respectable lady with whom, in the great drawing-room at Chelston Pleasance, his brother-in-law had essayed to trip a measure. Nearly six feet tall, gaunt, short-petticoated, with slim ankles and lean legs, and long, thin, flat feet, with a face like a horse, kindly dark eyes, black hair turning gray, a good Roman nose, prominent teeth, more than a suspicion of a moustache; a less lively woman to appreciate the delicate attention of being chucked under her chin never existed.

As for Susan, she felt she dared not look at Mr. Gayre; there was a suspicious twitching about her mouth and a tremor in her voice Mr. Sudlow could not comprehend, though both phenomena were perfectly intelligible to his companion.

'Going shopping, Miss Drummond?' asked Mr. Sudlow, who, in his new character of an almost engaged man, had already commenced to take an interest in so purely feminine a weakness.

'Yes, really,' answered Susan, with a little nod and a happy smile, and that sudden and vivid blush which was beginning sorely to perplex Mr. Gayre. What on earth could make her colour up at such a simple question?

'I always envy ladies their ability to sew and their liking for

turning over silks and satins,' observed the banker.

'My purchases,' said Susan, 'must be of a much more modest description;' while Miss Matthews didactically observed, she did not know what ladies would do without the resource of needlework.

As there probably never existed a man less able to suggest even a vague solution to such a conundrum than Sir Geoffrey's brother-in-law, wide though the field of speculation opened up by Miss Matthews' sententious remark might be considered, the banker wisely declined to enter on it. Instead he inquired when Miss Drummond might be expected at North Bank, and finding 'Very shortly—next week, perhaps,' took his leave, and, accompanied by Mr. Sudlow, walked off, followed by warm encomiums from Miss Matthews, who professed great astonishment that her former employer could be possessed of so desirable a relative.

'And who is the younger gentleman, Susan? I scarcely caught his name.'

'Mr. Sudlow—a captive of Margaret's spear and bow.'

'Will it come to anything?'

'I don't know. I hope not. He is only rich.'

'If he is rich, then you ought to wish it may come to a great deal. Margaret would be wretched married to a poor man; and she must be far happier and safer in the house of a husband than residing under the roof of her reckless and dissolute father.'

'Poor Sir Geoffrey!' remonstrated Susan. 'You are far too hard upon him.'

'No, indeed, my dear, I am not; and the only fault I have to find with you is that you wilfully shut your eyes to the real character of that dreadful man. I am so sorry you are going there;

it is really not respectable for a young girl to associate with a person who bears so bad a character as Sir Geoffrey Chelston.'

'He has never been bad to me,' retorted Miss Drummond sharply—'always good and kind and thoughtful. One can only speak of people as one finds them.'

'Ah, Susan—'

'Now it is of no use, Miss Matthews,' interrupted the girl, with that decision which often astonished Mr. Gayre; 'I shall always like Sir Geoffrey. I should like him even if he picked pockets.'

'So he does,' said the Roman Conqueror, as the Baronet had been wont to call his daughter's governess; 'so he does, if all accounts be true.'

'I don't care whether they are true or false. What is the use of being fond of a friend only when he does right? I should want my friends to be fond of me if I did wrong—as you would be, you know you would; so never ask me again to turn my back on Sir Geoffrey.'

As days went by, the object of all this charming loyalty might have been regarded almost as a reformed character. The Baronet was devoting himself to getting his daughter well settled with the same earnestness he brought to bear on betting, card-playing, and horse dealing.

'Sudlow finds those settlements a rasping fence,' he said to Mr. Gayre; 'but he shall take it, by ——! or give up all hope of Peggy;' and because he was steadfastly purposed to frustrate the slightest attempt to balk the jump, he rose betimes, and stayed about the house, and watched over Miss Chelston, who was now at home, like a hen with one chicken. The engagement at length became a fact accomplished, and Sir Geoffrey was pleased to

signify that he would put no obstacle in the way of a speedy marriage.

'You satisfy my lawyers,' was his terse way of putting the case in a nutshell to Mr. Sudlow, 'and you'll satisfy me. To save all trouble and argument, I have given them their instructions, by *which they will abide*,' and if any disinterested person had been by to see the shake of the head with which the Baronet emphasised this utterance, he could not have imagined that Miss Chelston's worthy papa was destitute of worldly wisdom.

For, indeed, there had come a certain change over Mr. Sudlow which puzzled and annoyed Sir Geoffrey. It was not that he cared for his lady-love less; but he certainly seemed in no hurry to endow her with the amount of his worldly goods upon which the Baronet insisted. That meeting with Susan Drummond told him how small the fair Marguerite's chance of inheriting her uncle's wealth might be considered, and hitherto he had always calculated that she would, sooner or later, come in for a good slice out of Lombard-street.

He longed to tell Sir Geoffrey and his daughter what he had discovered, he was waiting his opportunity to do so; but he did not wish to show his new card before Mrs. Morris, who sat constantly on guard doing lace-work, which she sold to various patronesses for the benefit of her grandson whose school-bills were made the excuse for that sort of genteel begging greatly in favour with ladies so situated they are obliged to wrest a living from society by hook or by crook.

He earnestly desired to get the matter off his mind before Miss Drummond again appeared at North Bank, and at length his

chance came one evening, when Mrs. Morris had been obliged to go to bed with a severe headache, and Sir Geoffrey was fidgeting about the room trying all the easy-chairs in succession, and thinking what an awful nuisance a daughter was, and wondering why Lady Chelston could not, excepting for contrariness, have presented him with a son instead, and marvelling when Mr. Sudlow would take his departure, and feeling sure there had never existed on the earth before so exemplary a father as himself.

Something was said about Mr. Gayre not coming so often as formerly to North Bank.

'I suppose,' added the Baronet, 'the fact is he has other fish to fry at Chislehurst. I confess I feel rather surprised at his choice myself. I hoped he might have gone in for something different; but there, money attracts money, there can be no question about that.'

'And Mrs. Jubbins is so immensely rich,' put in Miss Chelston softly.

'Are you quite sure it is Mrs. Jubbins?' asked Mr. Sudlow.

'Why, of course, man,' answered Sir Geoffrey; 'who else is there? who else should there be?'

'I daresay you know best,' said Mr. Sudlow; 'still, I have a notion that when Mr. Gayre marries it won't be the wealthy widow.'

'You speak as if you had some one in your eye,' exclaimed the Baronet, roused into attention.

'So I have.'

'And who is she? O, pray tell us!' entreated Miss Marguerite. 'What I would give to see her!'

'You can compass your desire without any great expenditure of either time or money,' said Mr. Sudlow triumphantly, for he felt the moment for making a *coup*

had come. 'Unless I am greatly mistaken, Miss Drummond will be metamorphosed into Mrs. Gayre before we are any of us much older.'

'Susan Drummond!' repeated the Baronet, sitting bolt upright in his chair, and holding the arms with both hands, while Margaret, literally, for the moment, bereft of speech, remained dumb. 'I think you are wrong there, my friend,' added Sir Geoffrey, after a pause, which seemed to last for years.

'Am I?'

'How in the world could such a notion have got into your head?'

'I can't imagine how it failed to get into yours,' answered Mr. Sudlow, with a fine scorn.

'Poor dear Susan, what a preposterous idea!' said Miss Chelston gently.

'You will find it a true one, I imagine,' persisted the new prophet.

'Fancy Susan my aunt!' suggested the beauteous Marguerite, in the sweetest accents, the time her heart was full of rage and malice and all uncharitableness.

'You might get a worse, Peggie, but never a better,' said the Baronet, who, having now grasped the position, decided there was something in it. 'If the land lies as you think, Sudlow, I for one shall be delighted. On the face of God's earth there walks no grander woman than Susan Drummond; and while I should have made the Jubbins welcome, I'd go out of my senses with delight if matters turned out as you think.'

'You are very disinterested, Sir Geoffrey.'

'Not I, faith; I know Susan would never take from my girl for herself. She'd be the making of Gayre — and — and — us all. I wonder how it was I never thought

of such a thing? Gad, if it had rested with me they should have been man and wife long enough ago.'

Mr. Sudlow opened his mouth to reply, but an imploring look from Miss Chelston caused him to shut it again. 'After all,' she said, 'my uncle may not have an idea of the kind.'

'I hope and trust he has,' cried Sir Geoffrey. 'You have brought me the best piece of news to-night, Sudlow, I have heard for this many a day. Susan married to Gayre! why, it sounds too good to be true. I'll go straight away down to him, and ask if there's anything in it. We can walk part of the way together,' and the Baronet rose from his chair with all the more alacrity that he thought he now saw his way to getting out of the house and rid of his future son-in-law at the same moment.

'For Heaven's sake, Sir Geoffrey, do no such thing!' entreated Mr. Sudlow. 'Your brother-in-law would never forgive me if he thought I had been meddling in his concerns. Whatever you do, pray keep my name out of the affair; or, rather, refrain from mentioning the matter at all. I — I may be mistaken; but I considered it only right to give you a hint. I did not know the match was one you would like. I fancied there might be objections both on the score of age and fortune.'

'Did you?' said Sir Geoffrey grimly. 'Understand, if you please, I consider Susan Drummond a fortune in herself. Why, with her family and Gayre's money, they might do just what they pleased; and as for that trifle of disparity, Gayre is a good fellow, and deserves a good wife; and, faith, if he gets Susan, he'll have something to be proud of.'

'I never admired Miss Drummond particularly myself,' remarked Mr. Sudlow—for which diplomatic speech he was rewarded by an appreciative glance from his lady-love—but from the first hour he saw her I know Mr. Gayre did.'

'Showed his taste,' commented the Baronet. 'However, I'll take no notice of what you have told us. Never spoil sport has always been my maxim. Upon my soul, I feel as much pleased as if anybody had given me a thousand pounds.'

Which appeared all the more creditable on the part of Sir Geoffrey as the feeling was certainly not shared by his charming daughter. She knew exactly what Mr. Sudlow was thinking, and her own opinion chanced to be identical with his. If Mr. Gayre married Susan he would not feel disposed to endow his niece with all he possessed. Miss Chelston had long fastened her gaze on the Lombard-street coffers, and it could not be said she regarded with pleasure the idea of Susan getting any share of the spoil.

'Don't say anything more about this before papa,' she hinted, during a brief absence of Sir Geoffrey for the purpose of draining a bumper to the health of the future Mrs. Gayre. 'Do you think my uncle is really thinking of marrying dear Susan?'

'I am quite sure he would like to marry her,' answered Mr. Sudlow; and then he explained how the knowledge had come upon him like a flash of lightning. 'Pon my honour, a child might have knocked me down,' he finished.

'It was wonderfully clever of you,' said Miss Chelston, with a pleasant flattery of voice, and word, and look; 'but then you are so clever. Don't you think

the disparity is dreadful, however?'

'Yes; but if Miss Drummond does not mind that, I am sure Mr. Gayre need not.'

'O, don't; I can't bear to think of it,' murmured Miss Chelston, shuddering; and then Sir Geoffrey, refreshed and invigorated, sauntered back into the room, where he began to yawn with such good effect that Mr. Sudlow felt reluctantly compelled to say good-night.

'Now, look here, my girl,' said Sir Geoffrey to his daughter, as he took his hat, preparatory to getting the 'cobwebs blown off him,' 'take my advice, and neither mell nor meddle in this business. You'd love dearly, I know, to stop the match, but it will be a deuced fine thing for you should it ever come off. As for Susan, if she can fancy your uncle—and he is not an old man for his age, he hasn't had to bear the anxiety I have—I'm sure she'll never repent taking him. When she comes here keep a quiet tongue about the matter. We'll want your uncle's help yet, I'm afraid, in that matter of the Sudlow fish; so for the Lord's sake don't let any of your woman's whimsies put his back up.'

Only to a certain extent did Miss Chelston comply with Sir Geoffrey's wishes. Miss Drummond spent a few hours at North Bank one day, and promised to return shortly and stop for a fortnight. It was then she and her friend had a serious talk about the Sudlow engagement.

'O Margaret! don't marry him; don't, like a darling,' entreated Susan at the close of a long and confidential interview. 'You do not care for him, and you do care for Lal Hilderton.'

'Miss Chelston laughed scornfully.

'Should you recommend me to marry Lal and make as good a match as you seem disposed to do?'

'Perhaps not,' said Susan, 'for there is that reason, you know, which might cause any one to feel afraid of marrying Lal; but you have led him on and on, and—'

'Now, remember, I cannot bear being lectured, more particularly by you,' interposed Miss Chelston.

'Well, then, tell Mr. Sudlow you can't marry him, and I won't say another word. Recollect, so long as I have a home you need never want one. And I am sure—'

'Make yourself very sure, dear, I mean to marry Mr. Sudlow. I shall not so far insult my own taste as to say he is the man I would have chosen. But beggars, you know—'

'O Maggie, Maggie!'

'O Susan! At the end of twelve months I wonder which of us will be the best off?'

'Good-bye, then, you poor mistaken child, and remember what I said.'

'I certainly shall not forget a word you have said, dear;' and with a sweet smile, Miss Chelston kissed her friend and saw Susan depart, and then sat down biding her time, which arrived that evening before dinner.

Mr. Sudlow was in evidence; Sir Geoffrey in high spirits, because his brother-in-law had walked up to North Bank; Mrs. Mor-

ris was putting the finishing touches to her toilette; Mr. Gayre was looking at the evening paper, when, in quite an artless and gushing manner, Miss Chelston opened her first parallel.

'I have such a piece of news for you, papa,' she said gaily.

'Good news, Peg?'

'Very good; it concerns Susan Drummond.'

'Let's hear it, then,' cried the Baronet.

'She is going to be married'—involuntarily Sir Geoffrey turned towards Mr. Gayre, but that gentleman never moved nor stirred, neither did the crisp sheet he held rustle—'to Oliver Dane. You remember Oliver, don't you? Old Mr. Dane's grandson,' went on the fair Margaret, almost without a pause, and maintaining an admirable composure. 'He is at present in some house in the City—Colvend & Surlees—but he is going to start on his own account, whatever that means, and the wedding is to take place before Christmas.'

'I don't think it will,' said Mr. Gayre from behind his newspaper; and as he spoke a dead silence fell on those present—they were waiting to hear more.

'Mr. Oliver Dane,' proceeded the banker, deliberately folding up the *Globe*, '*was this day charged at the Mansion House by his employers, Colvend & Surlees, with forgery and embezzlement, and remanded, bail being refused.*'

[To be continued.]

THE OLD BOOKSTALL.

'A Fig for Momus.'

AMONGST the most singularly curious of sixteenth-century books is that which bears the above title, and is further described as a 'Pleasant Varietie, included in Satyres, Eclogues, and Epistles, by T. L. of Lincoln's Inne, Gent.' Its presence on 'The Old Book-stall' should awaken some interest, for upon no other bookstall is it now likely to be discovered, so rare is it, and it is, moreover, the first collection of satirical poems in the English language.

It was published in the year 1595, 'for Clement Knight,' and sold 'at his shop at the Little North Doore of Paul's Church.' The initials of its author, Thomas Lodge, are those of one of our earliest dramatic poets and stage-players, although at the time of its appearance in print he was a student of the law at Lincoln's Inn, arguing moot points over the dinner-table, dancing in the old hall, playing in the old classic Greek plays, living cleanly, dressing soberly, and otherwise conforming to the rules of the Inn of Court, having previously done the same during preliminary study at one of the Inns of Chancery, I suppose Furnival's.

The birth of Lodge took place in or about 1558; and his father was in 1562 or 1563 Lord Mayor of London. In 1570 he commenced his education at the school of the Marchaunt-Tailors' Guild, then newly founded in a mansion in the parish of St. Laurence-Pountney, which had successively belonged to the Duke of Bucking-

ham, the Marquis of Exeter, and the Earls of Sussex. It was known as the Manor of the Rose, and the school was open to children of all nations to the number of two hundred and fifty, the conditions of admission being that each candidate should be able to read, write, and repeat 'the Catechisme in English or Latyn competently, or els,' added the law, 'lett them not be admytted in no wise.' Every 'scholler' when first admitted paid 'once for ever' the sum of 'twelve pence for wryting in of his name,' which money paid 'the surveyors to sweepe the schoole and keep the court of the schoole cleane, and see the streete nigh to the schoole gate clenased of all manner of ordure, caryon, or other fylthy or uncleane things out of good order.' To this school little Lodge trudged from his father's house every morning, winter and summer, to reach the Manor of the Rose 'at seaven of the clock;' and thence back to his father's house after 'eleaven of the clock,' whence he again returned to school at one o'clock, to leave again at five. The poor little chap must have had a very early breakfast, for amongst other laws of the school was one which said, 'Also lett them bring no meate, nor drinck, nor bottles, nor use in the schoole no breakfasts, nor drincking in the tyme of learning in no wise. If they need drinck, then lett it be provided in some other place.'

He had one half-day holiday in

the week, which was withdrawn in any week in which a general holiday took place.

From the Taylors' school Thomas Lodge, still in his teens, proceeded to Trinity College, Oxford (some say as servitor), where presently he pursued more or less diligently the advanced studies of that day, the subtle arguing in philosophy, which disciplined the mind and developed thought, giving it vigour, and strengthening manly dignity of character; the mastering of ancient Greek and Latin learning and the pious exercises which consecrated them, not forgetting the more joyous and genial sports and exercises, the speech-making, the chronicle-singing, and the telling of jests and stories round the great wood-fire in the hall, when he who failed, or came but poorly off in his doing, had to take his college beer well dosed with salt, or endure that dexterously given pinch between the lower lip and chin which always gave sharp pain and sometimes brought blood. There too he acted in the tragedies of the ancient Greek players, Æschylus and his handsome rival Sophocles, and began to master the principles of the classic drama, and to glow with the fervour of poetic inspiration.

With him at Oxford were George Peele, afterwards famous as the City poet—a young man of loose life and libertine character; and John Lyly, afterwards the fashionable Court poet—a little man of strangely fantastic imaginings and quaint conceits, who dearly loved his pipe. Peele was an actor, dramatist, and shareholder of the Blackfriars Theatre when that poor young fellow, who had got from his small country grammar-school 'little Latin and less Greek,' came from Stratford in Warwickshire afoot, or with the

carrier, to seek his fortune in London. But that was years after; for while these three fore-destined player-poets were at Oxford, William (son of John Shakespeare, prosperous chiefalderman of Stratford) was but a little child, holding his mother's gown as he trotted by her side through the streets of that small town beside the Avon.

From Oxford Thomas Lodge returned to London; and so I come back to my starting-point, where, although cap-and-gowned as a law student, Lodge, like young 'Ovid' in Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*, studied

'not the tedious laws,
To prostitute his voice in every cause;' but paid his court to the Muses, producing the work now before us, which he dedicated 'To the right honorable and thrice-renowned Lord William, Earl of Darby.'

Meres wrote of this collection: 'As Horace, Lucilius, Juvenal, Persius, and Lucullus are the best for satire among the Latins, so with us, in the same faculty, these are the chiefs: Piers Plowman, Lodge, Hall of Emanuel College in Cambridge, the author of *Pigmalion's Image*, &c.'

The first satire is addressed 'To Master E. Dig,' and opens—

'Digbie, whence comes it that the world
begins
To winke at follies, and to sooth up'
sinnes?
Can other reason be alleadged than this?
The world sooths sinne because it sinfull
is.'

He then proceeds to denounce the follies and vices of the day, both in those who are actively guilty of them, and those who are passively guilty by refraining from exposing and denouncing them; and turning upon servile flatterers, says:

'He is a gallant fit to serve my lord,
Which clawes† and sooths him up at
every word;

* Excuse.

† Applauds.

That cries, when his lame poesie he
heares,
" 'Tis rare, my lord, 'twill pass the nicest
cares."

Dealing with the slothful, he
writes :

'Selfe-will doth frowne when honest zeal
reproves,
To heare good counsell error never loves.
Tell purvie Rollus, lurking in his bed,
That humours by excessive ease are bred;
That sloth corrupts and choakes the vitall
sprights,
And kills the memorie, and hurts the
lights.*
He will not sticke, over a cup of sack,
To flout his counsellor behinde his backe.

For wicked men repine their sins to heare,
And folly fling† if counsaile tuch him
neare.'

But, on the other hand, if
you

'Tell bleer-eid Linus that his sight is
cleare,
Heele pawne himselfe to buy thee bread
and beere.'

For, as it goes on,

'Thus, though men's great deformities be
knowne,
They greeve to heare, and take them for
their owne.
Find me a niggard that doth want the
shift
To call his cursed avarice good thrift;

* Mental powers(?). † Kicks.

A rake-hell sworne to prodigalitie
That dares not term it liberalitie.'

In like way, the satire mocks
those who find harmless names for
their harmful vices, and seek pity
for misfortunes which are the
result of their evil doings; and
exclaims :

'Thus with the world the world dissem-
bles still,
And to their own confusions follow will,
Holding it true felicitie to flie,
Not from the sinne, but from the seeing
eie.
Then in this world who winks at each
estate
Hath found the meanes to make him for-
tunate;
To colour hate with kindness, to defraud
In private those in publique we applaud;
To keepe this rule, kaw me and I kaw thee,
To play the saints, whereas we divels
bee;
What ere men doe let them not repre-
hend,
For cunning knaves will cunning knaves
defend.'

For smooth melodious versifi-
cation the above will bear com-
parison with the productions of
many of our best modern poets,
and some of the lines and passages
would not disgrace the poems of
Pope or Dryden.

A. H. WALL.

ANECDOTE CORNER.

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY E. S. DIXON—J. PALGRAVE SIMPSON—SURGEON-GENERAL COWEN—WILLMOTT DIXON—THE ANECDOTE HUNTER—THE EDITOR—AND OTHERS.

A Hint for Ritualists.

WHILE Nestor Roqueplan, the clever and caustic author of *Parisine*, was still manager of the Opéra Comique at Paris, he took a holiday and went to Carpentras, a town in the south of France renowned for breeding tame rabbits in immense numbers, for profit. Almost every householder is a rabbit-breeder. Trains start from Carpentras laden with live rabbits. This, however, has nothing to do with my story.

Roqueplan went to *déjeuner* with one of his uncles, the curé of a neighbouring market-town, who did his best to welcome his nephew. In return, the nephew congratulated the uncle on his happiness in leading such a quiet life, &c.

'I have no reason, indeed, to complain,' said the Curé. 'There is only one thing which vexes me—the poverty of my church. Just fancy, my dear Nestor, that my acolytes are all in rags, and my choristers haven't a surplice to cover their backs. The sacristan officiates in his shirt-sleeves, and the Swiss (beadle) refuses to wear his uniform, under the pretext that it has faded from green to

yellow. It is an old forester's coat, given me by the widow, and certainly is past its best.'

'Make your mind easy, uncle, about that. I start for Paris to-morrow, and will send you such a lot of toggerie as has never been seen even in Carpentras church.'

As soon as he reached the Opéra Comique, Nestor Roqueplan made an inspection of the theatre's wardrobe; and a few days afterwards the Curé received a chest full of brilliant costumes which excited a revolution in the neighbourhood.

There was George d'Avenel's uniform, from the *Dame Blanche*, for the Swiss; Fra Diavolo's velvet mantle for the sacristan; the young acolytes were supplied with Chinese tunics abstracted from *La Fille du Mandarin*; while the choristers were metamorphosed into Neapolitan fishermen.

The good old Curé, surprised and delighted, recommended his dear nephew to the prayers of his parishioners, assuring them, at the same time, that such a pious act could not remain without its reward.

A Race in Music.

A KING of Spain, fancying that he had a taste for music, liked to take a part in Boccherini's quartets; but he never could succeed in keeping time. One day, when he was three or four bars behind-

hand, the other performers took fright at the confusion occasioned by the royal bow, and were about to wait for him. 'Fiddle away,' cried the enthusiastic monarch; 'I shall very soon get up to you.'

HE who, with Plato, shall place beatitude in the knowledge of God will have his thoughts raised to other contemplations than those who looked not beyond this spot of earth and those perishing things in it.—JOHN LOCKE.

The Ups and Downs of Russian Life.

THAT crazy Emperor Paul I. of Russia, during one of his drives, met a soldier whose countenance pleased him.

'Come into my carriage, lieutenant,' said Paul.

'Sire, I am only a private.'

'The Emperor is never mistaken, captain.'

'I obey your orders, sire.'

'Very good, commandant. Take your seat by my side. What lovely weather we have to-day!'

'Sire, I dare not venture—'

'What are you saying, colonel?'

Unluckily for the new-made colonel, the Emperor had to be back to the palace early that morning. If the drive had continued a few minutes longer, his chance companion would have been made field-marshal. As it was,

he was obliged to content himself with the grade of major-general.

But a few days afterwards, the same poor wretch, picked up by the Emperor in exactly the same way, had to go through the same gradations of rank, only in the reverse direction, and in half an hour, from being a major-general, had to become a private soldier again.

On another occasion, Paul, while reviewing a regiment which did not please him, gave the word of command, 'Right-about face! March! To Siberia!'

And the whole regiment, officers and men, were obliged to set off, by forced marches, for Siberia. It was only when they got halfway there that Count Rostopchine obtained their recall.

• A Wonderful Imposture.

IN the year 1788 a young man, the son of a tailor named Gunn, who was a clever artist, but of a wild roving disposition, was obliged, in consequence of being engaged in a midnight brawl, to fly from Edinburgh to London in company with his twin-sister. A few years after it was reported that he had died in London, and his sister returned to her native city, Edinburgh. It was noticed that she was a woman of a masculine appearance. Aided by her guardian, her parents being no more, she opened an academy for drawing and painting for young ladies, and was very successful, her school steadily increasing in reputation for at least twenty years, and she was engaged as teacher at all the principal ladies' boarding-

schools as professor of her art. She was a woman of some literary ability, and published poetry. While in the midst of her prosperity she fell into habits of dissipation which ultimately shut up her academy, deprived her of her outside engagements, and gradually reduced her to absolute beggary, so that she had to seek a final refuge in the workhouse. There the discovery was made that it was not the brother who died in London, but the sister. The supposed Miss Gunn was a man! She was turned into the streets, and resuming male attire, obtained at last employment as an artist, married, and had children, including twins. Of his latter years no record is in existence.

EDUCATION begins the gentleman, but reading, good company, and education must finish him.—JOHN LOCKE.

A Cat Hoax.

EARLY in the beginning of the present century it was publicly announced in Chester that the island of St. Helena, to which a large number of English families were on the eve of emigrating, was so infested with rats that the advertiser, acting for the Government, was prepared to purchase as many cats and healthy kittens as could be got by a given date. Sixteen shillings each were offered for male cats, ten shillings each for female cats, and half-a-crown each for kittens. On the last of the three days mentioned Chester was overwhelmed with an irruption of cats, brought to be delivered at the address advertised in the evening. Boys, men, and children came thronging in from all the surrounding parts laden with cats and kittens. Every road and lane was thronged with the comical proces-

sion, realising most completely the ancient riddle of St. Ives :

'As I was going to St. Ives,
I met fifty old wives.
Every wife had fifty sacks;
Every sack had fifty cats;
Every cat had fifty kittens.
Kittens, cats, sacks, and wives,
How many were going to St. Ives?

Upwards of three thousand cats were calculated as the number then in Chester, and a battle ensued amongst their bearers in the struggle to reach the door of the advertised house, which proved to be an empty one; and terrible indeed was the scene when, the hoax being discovered, the three thousand cats were, with comparatively few exceptions, turned loose to invade the houses. On the following day five hundred dead cats were counted floating down the river Dee.

One Man's Meat is another Man's Poison.

AFTER Paris, the city which has the greatest number of restaurants is San Francisco, where there are restaurants of all nations, even Chinese. A traveller who tried a dinner at the latter brought home and communicated the bill to a friend. Here is an authentic copy of the same :

Dog soup . . .	0fr. 50c.
Cat cutlets . . .	1fr. 0c.
Roast dog . . .	0fr. 75c.
Dog pâté . . .	0fr. 20c.
Rats braisées . . .	0fr. 20c.
Total . . .	2fr. 65c.

Or twoshillings and one halfpenny; cheap, and probably not nasty—for those who like it.

Anecdote of Sydney Smith.

THE following anecdote is accredited to Sydney Smith: An archæologist, who was collecting the armorial bearings and other historical records of the dignitaries of the Church, came to the witty Canon of St. Paul's for his coat-of-arms. 'I have none,' said Smith,

'to show you.' 'What, none! No book-plate, no crest, no seal?' inquired the astonished collector. 'No, certainly not,' replied the Canon; 'and shall I tell you why? Because the Smiths always stamped the wax of their letters with their right thumb.'

FINE feelings, without vigour of reason, are in the situation of the extreme feathers of a peacock's tail—dragging in the mud.—JOHN FOSTER.

Mind your Stops.

KING EDWARD II., who was assassinated at Berkeley Castle, is said to have lost his life by the misplacement of a comma. The following lines,

'To shed King Edward's blood
Refuse to fear, I count it good,'

having been sent to the keeper of his prison, the comma, instead of being placed after the word 'refuse,' was inserted after the word 'fear,' so that the line read thus, 'refuse to fear;' and the keeper, accepting the error, probably a wilful one, allowed the King to be murdered.

Another instance is given of the Bishop of Assello losing his bishopric by a painter's mistake in placing the same stop. After his elevation to the see, the prelate ordered this inscription to be put over his gate: '*Porta, patens esto, nulli clauderis honesto*'—'Gate, be thou open, and not shut to any honest man.' But the said painter unfortunately put the comma after the word 'nulli,' instead of after the word 'esto,' so the sense stood thus: 'Gate, be thou open to nobody, but be shut to an honest man;' and so the Pope dethroned him.

A Classical Quiz.

THERE was a man at college whose father had made a vast amount of money, but had not perfected his son in the use of the letter *h*. The youngster was fond of riding, or at any rate of talking about it; and one day he was expatiating at dinner on the subject of 'osses. Thereupon the college wag broke in with an observation: 'You would never have been able to sit a Roman steed, Fledgley!' 'Why not?' asked the unsuspecting boaster. 'Because,' answered the

wag, 'the *os* of the Romans was nothing but *bone*.'

Five minutes later young Cræsus was on the subject of hate, which he spoke of as 'ats. 'Fledgley,' the remorseless wag broke in, 'you would hardly care to sport a Roman headdress.' 'How so?' said Fledgley, this time rather suspiciously. 'Because,' answered the other, 'the *at* of the Romans is the *but* [read *butt*] of the moderns!'

A Curious Coincidence.

WHEN George III. went to Plymouth in 1787 to lay the foundation-stone of the great North Dock, he noticed that the architect had exceeded the dimensions which had been given to him by the Navy Board, and requested an explanation. Mr. Parlbay, the builder, said it was so altered because the French were then constructing at Toulon a

ship called the Commerce de Marseilles, which was so large that none of his Majesty's docks but this would be large enough for its accommodation. Curiously enough, when war broke out, and Toulon was given up with its shipping and arsenal, this very vessel was brought into this dock, and was the first it received.

WHEN Philosophy has gone so far as she is able, she arrives at Almightyness, and in that labyrinth is lost ; where, not knowing the way, she goes on by guess, and cannot tell whether she is right or wrong ; and like a petty river is swallowed up in the boundless ocean of Omnipotency.—OWEN FELLTHAM.

The Porcupine-Man.

IN the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1755, Mr. H. Bakers, F.R.S., describes the extraordinary case of Edward Lambert, whose skin (with the exception of the inside of his hands and feet-soles, head and face) was covered with excrescences of a wart-like nature and cylindrical in form, rising to the height of about an inch, and growing close together at their bases, stiff, but elastic and rustling when touched, which were shed and renewed at intervals more or

less regularly in the autumn or winter. New excrescences of a paler colour than grew up and supplanted the old ones, which fell off. The man's health was generally good. Still more extraordinary is the statement, made on such seemingly excellent authority, that each of Lambert's six children had a skin covered in the same way, although at the time Mr. Bakers wrote only one was living, who was publicly exhibited with his father.

The Flying Dutchman.

FROM a work called *Researches into Atmospheric Phænomena*, by Thomas Forster, Esq., we make the following extracts. Among the superstitions traceable to atmospheric phenomena may be mentioned the Flying Dutchman, a ship said by mariners to become visible about the Cape of Good Hope in stormy weather. 'She is never known to get into port, and is seen at uncertain times sailing at an immense rate before the wind, under full press of canvas, in the most violent gales.' The story runs that her captain swore so fear-

ful an oath, that as a punishment for his blasphemy it was realised, and he was condemned to beat about the sea until the day of judgment. Mr. Forster says, 'From the corroborated accounts of many navigators there seems to be no doubt but that something is seen, which they take for a distant sailing vessel; but the most intelligent naval officers with whom I have conversed seem to regard it as some waterspout, or else a cloud reflected in mist, or some other atmospheric phantom.'

A Conservative Paradise.

THERE is an old riddle which is as follows, 'Why is a bald head like heaven?' The answer to which is, 'Because it is all clear and shining, and there is no parting there.' This conundrum was pro-

pounded to the late Lord Derby when leader of the Tory party. He replied on the instant, 'The answer is palpable : because there are no Whigs there.'

THE intellectual faculty is a goodly field, capable of great improvement; and it is the worst husbandry in the world to sow it with trifles or impertinences.—SIR MATTHEW HALE.

Confidence is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom.—LORD CHATHAM.

Theatrical Reminiscences.

BEAUVALLLET was acting with Madame Dorval in the *Camp des Croisés*—the Crusaders' Camp—a high-flown drama written in verse. Madame Dorval, as Leah, had to spout a tirade, 'I can guide the caravan across the desert, I can recite the prayers for morn and evening, I can search the Koran for Moslem law, I can lead the way to the distant well,' &c.

Beauvallet, clad in an Arab burnous, slyly opened it unseen by the audience, and inquired of Leah in an undertone, 'But can you play the clarinet?' at the same time letting her see that, instead of a scimeter, he had one of those instruments suspended at his side.

Madame Dorval had the greatest difficulty in continuing her part with decent gravity.

Mrs. Siddons, sitting next to a Lord Provost, in her casual remarks tumbled into blank verse:

'Beef cannot be too salt for me, my lord.'
And on another occasion startled a page—

'I asked for porter, boy;
You've brought me beer!'

Kemble, too, had the same inclination to speak stagey. When crossing a swollen stream at Abbotsford he said to Sir Walter Scott,

'The flood looks angry, sheriff:
Methinks I'll get me up into a tree.'

A French clown used to appear before the British public with annual benefits, which always re-

sulted unfavourably. Never dispirited, he came forward to the footlights on one occasion with a little speech: 'Mesdames et messieurs, moche oblige—ver goot benefice—only lose a half-crown—I come again.'

A respectably dressed fellow, meeting Garrick, claimed his acquaintance on professional grounds.

'I don't remember you, my good sir,' said the actor.

'Nevertheless, we have often played together in *Hamlet*. You remember Horatio—'

'You have never played Horatio to my *Hamlet*.'

'Certainly not. But you remember that Horatio, describing the Ghost's disappearance, says,

"But even then the morning cock crew
 loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight."

'Well, what then?'

'The Ghost, at the close of his interview with *Hamlet*, says,

"The glowworm shows the matin to be
 near,
And 'gins to pale his ineffectual fire.
Adieu, adieu, adieu—remember me!"

'Yes, to be sure. And then?'

'Why, then, you know, as we could not make much of the glowworm on the stage, it was agreed to introduce the cock-crow.'

'But your part in the tragedy?'

'It was I who played the cock!'

A very indifferent actor, who shall be nameless, when personating an Irishman in a new farce at one of

THINK not silence the wisdom of fools, but, if rightly timed, the honour of wise men who have not the inferiority but the virtue of taciturnity; and speak not of the abundance, but the well-weighted thoughts of their hearts. Such silence may be eloquence, and speak thy worth above the power of words. Make such a one thy friend, in whom princes may be happy, and great counsels successful. Let him have the key of thy heart who hath the lock of his own, which no temptation can open; where thy secrets may lastingly lie, like the lamp of Olybius his urn, alive and light, but close and invisible.—SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

the then called 'major' theatres, met with a cold and discouraging reception. By way of explaining his comparative failure, he button-holed Harley in the green-room, and maintained with great volubility that the part was a poor one, and so wanting in spirit and originality that no one could make anything of it. 'Very likely,' remarked John Pritt; 'but do you know, when I saw you play it, it struck me that what it wanted most was *Power!*'

During the rage for spelling-bees a clergyman was 'turned down' at a fashionable assembly for spelling drunkenness with one 'n.' Shortly afterwards he returned to his parish, and found himself very coldly received by his parishioners. He sent for the parish clerk, and asked him what was the cause. 'Well, sir,' replied the man, 'a report has come down here that you were turned out of a great lady's house in London for drunkenness.'

One Way of making a Fortune.

A FRENCH banker named Ostwald, who died in 1790, worth one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds, began to make his fortune by carrying home from the taverns

all the bottle-corks he could collect, which in eight years realised the twelve louis-d'ors which he regarded as the real foundation of his prosperity.

Prussian Anecdotes.

FREDERICK II. of Prussia, every time a new soldier was enrolled in his famous Guards, who were picked from the flower of his regiments, almost always asked him three questions: 'How old are you?' 'How long have you been in my service?' 'Do you receive your pay and your uniform punctually?' A young Frenchman, who had been selected on account of his good mien and his lofty stature, but who did not know German, was advised by his captain to learn by heart the answers to those

three questions. But the King this time began with the second question, 'How long have you been in my service?' 'Twenty-one years, sire.' 'And how old are you?' 'One year, so please your Majesty.' 'Either you or I have lost our senses.' 'Both, sire.' 'This is the first time I have been treated as a madman!' The young soldier, whose German was now exhausted, remained silent, having no more ready-made answers to give, and, on the King's further questioning, was forgiven on con-

O POVERTY! or what is called a reverse of fortune! Among the many bitter ingredients that thou hast in thy most bitter cup, thou hast not one so insupportably bitter as that which brings us in close and hourly contact with the earthenware and huckaback beings of the nether world. Even the vulgarity of inanimate things it requires time to get accustomed to; but living, breathing, bustling, plotting, planning, human vulgarity is a species of moral ipecacuanha enough to destroy any comfort.—THOMAS CARLYLE.

No man can be provident of his time who is not prudent in the choice of his company.—JEREMY TAYLOR.

fessing that that was all the German he knew.

—*—
Potsdam school-house, having been built after the model of Cardinal Quirini's palace at Rome, had but one entrance. The in-

spector and deacon thereof petitioned for a separate entrance to their apartments; when, to their mortification, the King, Frederick II., answered,

'There is but one entrance into heaven!'

Political Celebrities.

THE late Lord Beaconsfield was always ready and ever courteous, as is pretty well known. A young scion of the aristocracy was introduced to Mr. Disraeli, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, in these words: 'This is Mr. D—, who has just entered the Civil Service, but not in the department over which *you*, sir, preside.' The Chancellor bowed, placed his hand upon his heart, and replied, 'That is my misfortune.'

—*—
Mr. Gladstone was lately on a visit to a noble owner of 'surging woods,' who was asked on the termination of the visit how he

had enjoyed the visit of the Premier. 'Very much,' was the reply; 'but the next time he comes I shall ask him to bring his own *trees* with him.'

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Mr. Roebuck on one occasion told the following in the House of Commons, *apropos* of the partial and unsatisfactory nature of fame. The great Duke of Wellington was just dead, and Mr. Roebuck communicated the fact to an intelligent gardener at the house in Dorsetshire where he was staying on a visit. The man replied, 'The Duke of Wellington! And who be's he, sir?'

Two Anecdotes of Louis Napoleon.

PRIOR to the French Revolution of 1848, Louis Napoleon was a constant guest at the country seat of a noble Earl, who is now a Viscount, and well known at Court and in society. He had recently escaped from perpetual imprisonment in Ham, was nearly forty, and somewhat depressed. He

would sit for hours in a corner of the room, perfectly taciturn and completely moped. The lovely Countess was in despair, and was accustomed to exclaim, 'What *shall* we do with poor Louis Napoleon?' 'I think the best thing would be to marry him to Lady —, naming a lady whose *only*

MENTAL TONES.—The mind is not always in the same state, being at times cheerful, melancholy, severe, peevish. These different states may not improperly be denominated tones.—LORD KAMES.

attraction was her vast wealth. Thus in imagination was the future arbiter of peace and war in Europe comfortably disposed of.



Soon after Louis Napoleon's election to the Presidency of the Republic, he was riding in the Bois, when he met the carriages

of Lady Blessington. After a brief chat the President inquired, '*Restez-vous longtemps ici ?*' The witty Irish lady replied, '*Pas longtemps, Monseigneur ! Et vous ?*' The literary Countess considered the retort deserved, with the recollection of the cordial hospitality dispensed by her at Gore House to the exiled Prince.

Military Wit.

'MONSIEUR, how old are you?' the Maréchal de Bassompierre inquired of Captain Striguen.

'Thirty-eight, monsieur, perhaps—or forty-eight.'

'But there is a considerable difference between the two. Don't you know your own age nearer than that?'

'No, monsieur, I do not. I count my cash, my plate, and my income, because I might lose them; thieves might rob me. But as nobody will steal my years, I do not take the trouble to count them.'



Amongst the great number of generals made prisoners at the

battle of Hohenfriedberg, 4th June 1745, there was one called Roman. The day after the battle, this general being admitted to the royal table, in company with the others, the King said to him:

'Since I have beat your army this time, I shall do the same always.'

The general replied:

'Hannibal beat the Romans four times, but the fifth time was himself beaten, which put an end to the war.'

'True,' answered the King, with some vivacity; 'but Hannibal did not command Prussians, and had all *Romans* against him.'



Designed by F. M. BLAKE.

SUMMER STUDIES.

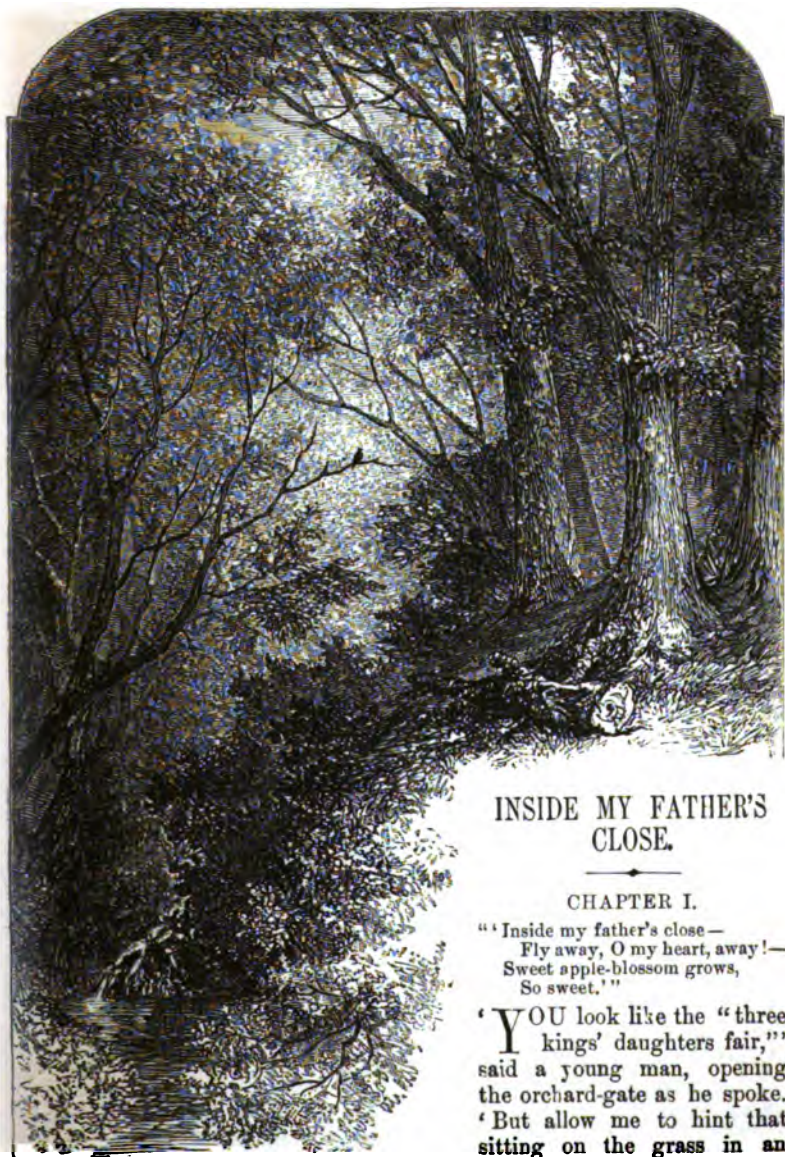
Engraved by R. TAYLOR.

* A thousand voices thee to study call,
From the fair hill-top, from the waterfall;
Where the bird singeth, and the yellow bee,
And the breeze talketh from the airy tree.

Frederick

LONDON SOCIETY.

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INSIDE MY FATHER'S CLOSE.

CHAPTER I.

"'Inside my father's close—
Fly away, O my heart, away!—
Sweet apple-blossom grows,
So sweet.'"

'YOU look like the "three
kings' daughters fair,"'
said a young man, opening
the orchard-gate as he spoke.
'But allow me to hint that
sitting on the grass in an

English May is apt to end in rheumatism.'

'We've got rugs,' was the terse answer.

The three girls—one of whom had sung the snatch of the ballad—Olive, May, and Bertie, daughters of Sir Francis Wareham, of Wareham Place, South Devon, were sitting under the blossoming apple-trees; and, as Val Horton thought, they made a pretty picture in their light dresses, freshly donned for the first time this year in honour of the warm mid-May afternoon, as they sat amid the soft thick grass under the vermeil and snow of the apple-blossom, with the blue sky overhead.

'Have you been out here long?' said Val, throwing himself down on the grass by May's side, in a manner which showed she was the member of the triad in whom the young man considered himself to have a special interest.

'All the afternoon,' answered Olive. 'Tea is coming almost directly.'

'You may stay and have a cup if you like,' said May.

'Thank you,' said Val gravely, 'but you exceed your prerogative. Olive is *châtelaine*, and I am waiting for her to invite me.'

'By the way, she will have to play *châtelaine* now in earnest,' said May.

'O yes, Val,' exclaimed Bertie, 'you haven't heard the news.'

'I thought no news ever came to Upton,' said Val. 'What is it?'

'We have a visitor coming.'

'A visitor!'

'Yes,' returned Bertie; 'we don't quite know what to make of it, or to do with him.'

'O, it's a him, is it?'

'A young him,' returned Miss May mischievously.

'What the—I mean, who is he? and what—'

'I can't answer more than one question at a time.'

'It's too bad! Olive, you are the only sensible one of the family, I shall ask you.'

'It is our cousin, Garde Wareham,' said Miss Wareham quietly. 'He is going out with this African expedition, and he and papa have had some correspondence about papa's travels, and now he is coming here to spend a few days.'

'Isn't he the son of your father's brother, with whom he quarrelled?'

'Uncle Ralph; yes, but papa never speaks of him, and we really know nothing of Garde, not even his age.'

'Can't you hazard a guess?'

'Well, we have come to the conclusion,' said May, 'that he must be about a year older than Olive, and therefore—'

'A patriarch,' put in Val. 'How old are you, Olive? twenty-four, is it not?'

'Old enough to look down on all you children,' said Miss Wareham, with a bright smile. 'But here is papa,' she added, as the tall figure of an elderly gentleman was seen in the distance.

'Followed by Thomas and tea,' said Bertie, springing up to arrange rugs, &c., as a servant came towards the orchard, laden with a rustic table and the tea-tray.

'Val,' said Olive, in a lower voice, as she rose to help Bertie, 'don't talk of Garde to papa, unless he begins the subject.'

'I won't; but why? Has Sir Francis—'

'I don't know. I don't fancy he likes it, that is all.'

All, but a great deal. Olive Wareham had been her father's friend all through her early womanhood, and had learnt, that while he put implicit trust in her and rested on her affection, there were yet things in his life he kept as

secret from her as from all others. She respected his reserve and had no curiosity, being saved from it by an absolute faith in her father, very rare and sweet.

Her example had acted on her younger sisters, and it was in no small degree due to Olive that May and Bertie looked up to Sir Francis as the wisest, kindest, best of men. In truth he deserved his children's affection; but with many girls confidence might have been impaired by a certain shy reserve, touched with sadness, in his character, which had for years made him decline any share in county gaieties for himself, and shrink from them for his daughters.

The three girls lived rather a strange life for maidens of long descent, stainless name, fair faces, and ample dowries; they never went to London, never had visitors to stay at Wareham, and seldom indulged in the rather weary cycle of county dissipation. The families round naturally called Sir Francis unsociable, and pitied his girls; but he was simply a shy sad man, whom years of Eastern travel, followed by the great shock of his wife's death, had unfitted for finding his pleasure in a London season, or in a round of formal dinners.

But he was not morose, as many of his neighbours called him: he was glad that his daughters should take simply and naturally what sweetness of life fell in their way. Years ago he had given the living of Upton, the village adjoining Wareham, to an old college friend, Reginald Horton, and had enjoyed his society ever since. Val and Rose Horton had grown up as the chief friends and playmates of the Wareham girls; and the natural sequence of this had come to pass three months before this May afternoon, by Val telling May and her father frankly that he loved her.

Sir Francis showed his children's trust in him was well grounded. He knew May's happiness was safe with Val, and quietly told the young man that he would sooner have him for a son-in-law than most young fellows, and that when he could show he was earning three hundred pounds a year, he might claim May. Till then they must wait, and he, Val, must work.

Which Val did, though he was now enjoying a week's holiday from his law-books in May's sweet presence.

It was a pleasant tea that day under the apple-trees. Sir Francis seemed rather abstracted and sad; but only Olive noticed this, and she had tact enough to draw attention away from him by encouraging May's and Val's fun, and Bertie's bright teasing of the latter.

'Come and have a row in the boat,' exclaimed Bertie, when tea was over; 'Val and I will pull.'

May consented. Olive would have done the same, but she remembered some letters she had to write, and so declined, as did her father. The two younger girls raced off across the orchard with Val, like children as they were, with a golden-brown collie bounding after them, barking and sniffing in a frantic ecstasy of enjoyment.

'Are you going indoors at once, Olive?' said Sir Francis, after a few moments' silence.

'I needn't, papa; the letters are not very important.'

She looked a very fair ideal of English maidenhood as she stood there, with a certain lovely severity in the slim lines of her figure, the straight sweet features of her face, that had in it something of a nymph-like charm, removed from the bright prettiness of her sisters. The clear gray eyes were calm, with the calm of a woman who had known little but happiness

and not much excitement in her life, who had lived sanely and healthily in those 'primal duties which shine aloft like stars,' drawing her happiness from her home affections, her culture from nature and good books.

Was there something yet to be awakened in Olive's life, of which, at four-and-twenty, she was unconscious? If it were so, the thought never crossed her father's mind. He had often pondered over the chances of his other daughters making homes for themselves, but he had never dreamt of losing Olive.

'I want to tell you something,' he said: 'I think you ought to know it; at all events it will put me more at ease if I tell you.'

'Yes!' she said, and waited.

'It is like touching an old sore,' said her father musingly. 'When one has a skeleton in the closet it is as well to keep the door shut, and open it as seldom as possible.'

'I'm not quite sure, papa; perhaps if the fresh air were let in the skeleton might crumble, and the wind blow away the dust.'

Sir Francis smiled, a little bitterly.

'The analogy is false, Olive; skeletons don't moulder away like that, especially such skeletons as the one I have had shut up in my closet all these years.'

Olive looked at him anxiously and tenderly, but she never thought of connecting the idea of any wrongdoing with the father she loved and honoured. Indeed, she knew him too well not to know that, whatever it was that clouded his life, it was no shadow of remorse or sin.

'Have you ever wondered,' said Sir Francis—'but of course you have—why you have never heard anything of your uncle Ralph or his son?'

'Yes,' answered Olive honestly.

'You have never guessed any reason?'

'No, papa; but indeed we never wished to.'

He sighed, but it was a sigh of relief.

'I believe that, my child. I have never known you curious, though in this case it would scarcely have been strange if you had been; but I am glad that even you, who have lived so close to me all these years, have never guessed at the secret. God knows it seems a shame to me to tell of my brother's shame even to you.'

'Uncle Ralph?'

'You don't know, Olive, how he and I loved each other. I thought, too, that he loved the old name as well as I did, and as our father had done. It was hard on him to be the younger son, but I did my best for him; he might have had what he asked for, he should have known that.'

There was a pleading ring of self-exculpation in the man's tone, which touched his daughter to the heart, but she said nothing.

'I would have given him what he would,' said Sir Francis, 'but he was timid—poor Ralph!' with an unutterable softening of the voice. 'He did not dare ask, I suppose; and it was that, partly, which galled me. Olive'—he laid his hand heavily on hers as he spoke, so heavily that she started—'rather than ask me for the pitiful money to pay for a folly he wished to hide—a bet or card losses—he forged my name!'

The veins swelled in the man's forehead, the angry light kindled in his eyes, the fierce ring of the voice spoke of years of brooding pain, born of an intense pride, and an anger against the one who had smirched an otherwise spotless shield.

'Did you never forgive him?' said Olive, her voice full of pain.

'Forgive him!' Sir Francis's laugh was hard and sharp. 'It was not I alone he had wronged. It was all of us—himself, you, I, his poor child, his father and mother—dead, thank God! We can't wipe it out that a Wareham has been a forger, a liar, a cheat. And that he should have been the one—the handsomest, cleverest, the dearest fellow! God knows how he came to do it, I don't.'

'Did you find it out?'

'Yes, I. No one knew of it except I and his wife, poor soul. I never saw him again. I increased his allowance—made his mess of pottage larger than it had been. He had bought it at so dear a price, it was only fair it should be of a size to content his stomach, if such food could. Then he died. I've seen that the boy has been brought up like a Wareham. You know he comes after me here.'

'Don't!'

'It's the truth, and it is as well to face it, bitter as it is, lest the stain show in the boy. Ah, Olive—no, my child, I can't wish that any of you three were a boy, but—It will not be a very noble heritage Ralph's son will come into,' he added. 'I shall leave you all I can, and only the house itself and about five or six acres round are entailed.'

'O, but, father, you will do what is just?'

'Rob my own children to enrich Ralph's boy! No, I will not. It will be a barren portion falls to his lot.'

'But Wareham ought to be kept up, and he—Garde—has not done wrong.'

'You are pleading against yourself, my Olive,' said Sir Francis tenderly. 'It is like you, child. I do not want to be unjust to Garde, and so, pain though it be to think of seeing him, when he wrote to say he was joining this

African expedition and asked for some details of my experience, I invited him down here. I don't think I have done wrong.'

'How can you have?'

'It rests with you and the others whether I have or not.'

'With us?' she turned her innocent frank eyes to her father with undisguised amazement.

'Yes,' Sir Francis paused for a moment; then continued, in a would-be jesting tone, 'It's very well for this young Perseus to come and ask advice as to his journey from old Atlas, but how about his stay in the Hesperides garden? I'll do the youngster the justice to believe he doesn't come after the golden fruit. I like the lad's letters, and judge too well of him from them for that. Besides, his mother has had the bringing up of him, and a better and truer woman than she is never breathed; but,' with an uneasy laugh, 'how about the nymphs themselves?'

It was as though a sudden quick flame struck Olive's brow and cheek; but her father had had no thought of her, as his next words showed.

'Olive, I look to you that nothing goes wrong. May is out of danger, that is one comfort; but Bertie—there must be no nonsense between her and her cousin, do you understand? You know the reason: Garde Wareham is Ralph's son, and Ralph has been our bitter black disgrace.'

Love to hatred turned spoke in those words and in the voice, which shook, after all these years, at the mention of the brother's name.

Olive said nothing, her father's tone frightened and subdued her; but an infinite tenderness and pity crept into her heart for Garde, on whom his father's sins seemed so hardly visited.

'You will do your best,' said

Sir Francis. 'You are loyal, Olive?'

'Yes; but, papa, what can I do? How could I prevent it if they—and it does seem hard, unjust—if they should care for each other? And Garde is worthy of Bertie; he has done no wrong.'

'You make me sorry I have asked him,' said Sir Francis, far more sternly than his girls often heard him speak.

'I will do all I can,' she said hastily, 'though I don't see how. Do you want me to tell May and Bertie?'

'Good Heavens, no!' Sir Francis seemed rather perplexed.

'I don't think there can be much danger, papa, if he is only here for a week.'

Her father smiled. 'Women know women best. You don't think Bertie is foolish enough to lose her heart in so short a time?'

'No,' said Olive decidedly; 'and, besides' (as Bertie's sweet laugh was blown to them across the orchard from the near river), 'she is only a child, after all.'

'She is eighteen,' Sir Francis answered. 'Your mother was married at that age.'

He lit his cigar as he spoke, and strolled across the orchard towards the river-bank; while Olive sat still, thinking.

She understood it now—the cancer which underlay her father's morbid shrinking from society; the sense of the shame, unknown to the world, which yet had eaten into his very heart; the blot on the escutcheon, which his old-world pride found it impossible to forget; and she understood, too, with a fine intuition, the wounded love that gave the bitterest smart to the pain; the knowledge—that the brother, dealt with after the perfect law of love and honour, could not repay trust with trust.

Still she could not see what she could or ought to do to prevent that which her father dreaded from coming to pass. If Bertie and Garde should fall in love with each other, how could she prevent it? She wished her father had not spoken of this; as it was, it would make her feel like a spy over her sister and cousin.

There was a strange swelling in her throat, a momentary feeling of longing for the free careless girl-life her sisters had always lived, and she, somehow, never. Her mother had died when Bertie was born, and so, since Olive's very early childhood, there had always rested on the girl a heavy weight, as it were, of duty and responsibility.

So she had grown up a very wise sweet woman, loved by most who knew her, but never living in the flower-like glad way her sisters did. She never would now; she was nearly five-and-twenty—six years older than May, and May was engaged to be married.

'How foolish I am!' she thought indignantly to herself. 'I would not be happier than I am, and life is very beautiful.'

Yet foolish as it was, as she looked through the clear air to the opaline evening sky, feeling the soft breath of the coming summer on her cheek, she felt vaguely as though she needed some emotion that should make the meaning of this sweet outside world visible to her; as though the rosy apple-trees, the tender sky, the wide ether, the very hush of evening, held a message she dimly yearned after, yet could not understand.

'Olive, Olive!' came Bertie's voice from the river, 'do come and help to row. Val is no good at all; he lets me do all the work. I'll have my revenge out of Garde when he comes next week.'

CHAPTER II.

It was rather a chilly evening a week later, raining, and with an east wind, which made the fire in the drawing-room at Wareham look very comfortable. Olive was sitting in a low chair near the blaze, reading by firelight, a discreditable practice to which she was addicted; the only other person in the room was Bertie, who was lying on the rug before the fire, playing with a Persian kitten, at present her especial pet.

Both sisters were dressed for dinner; Olive in an Indian silk of a pale primrose tint, made very simply, and falling in long supple folds; and in the square-cut bodice, just by the sweet slender curve of her throat, there was fastened one silvery eucharis bloom. Bertie wore a creamy muslin, crumpled—as all Bertie's dresses were after half an hour's wearing—yet fresh and pretty, and setting off with its billowy puffings and loops the girl's slim, yet rounded, figure and pretty face, fresh in its tints as the cluster of apple-blossom which nestled in her soft brown hair.

'Seven o'clock; the train is late,' said Sir Francis, entering the room. 'The dog-cart ought to be back by this time. You asked Val and Rose up to dinner, did you not, Olive?' he added, in a tone which betrayed a shade of nervousness to his eldest daughter's ear.

'I can't think why you asked them,' grumbled Miss Bertie from her post on the rug. 'I should think we four were quite equal to entertaining one man. Poor fellow, he will have enough to do, making acquaintance with us all. I can't think, papa,' she continued audaciously, 'why you have never asked him—'

'Hark!' said Olive hastily. 'There are wheels.'

Another minute or two and they

were in the hall, welcoming the young man, who dismounted from the dog-cart in an ulster sparkling with raindrops.

'How wet it is!' said Sir Francis, as he shook hands with his nephew. 'The brougham ought to have been sent.'

Garde Wareham laughed, and his laugh was very pleasant.

'You must think me a muff, sir, to mind a shower like this. I enjoyed my drive very much.'

The hall was rather dark, and no one could see any one else distinctly, so that Olive's and Bertie's first impressions of their cousin were a little vague. Olive was sensible of a tall figure in a very thick ulster, of a winning voice and a cordial hand-grasp, and this was all, before Garde was shown up to his bedroom, and the two girls returned to the drawing-room, where five minutes later they were joined by May.

'What is he like?' inquired that young woman.

'I don't know,' said Bertie, 'the hall was so dark; but he is very tall, and I like his voice, and I mean to like him.'

Olive was rather glad their father was not in the room.

'Yet what nonsense it is!' she said to herself, rallying her common sense. 'Their liking each other frankly is the best thing. I won't worry myself about nothing, but try to take things sensibly.'

Twenty minutes later, when Val and Rose had arrived, Garde Wareham entered the drawing-room.

'By Jove! he is a good-looking fellow,' was Val Horton's thought.

Sir Francis's was, 'So like, so like!'

Both were right; the Warehams were a handsome family, and Garde had inherited all their best points. The lithe firmly-knit figure, the broad shoulders, the well-poised

head, the dark-gray eyes, with the large pupils and clear irises with no hint of hazel, the straight fine features, all these Garde Wareham had, as had his father before him. But if Sir Francis had scanned his nephew's face more closely, he would have seen a difference between Ralph's face and his son's, and a difference of much import. Ralph Wareham had been almost effeminately beautiful; but it was not from him, but from 'the right true woman's manliness' of his wife, that their son had the firm chin, the sweet strong mouth, which carried out to nobleness the refined beauty of the brow and eyes.

It was a bright face, too, the face of a man in the strength of his youth.

There was a slight stiffness, as there could not well help being, over the party at first, and it seemed as though Bertie had had some reason in her declaration, that it would have been much better not to have asked Rose and Val up on this first evening of Garde's visit. But by the time Garde had got through his soup and sherry, with the relish acquired by a man during an eight hours' railway journey, his own awkwardness had vanished, and before dinner was half over all the party except two were thoroughly at their ease.

Even these two, Sir Francis and Olive, grew unrestrained and cheerful as the meal progressed. Sir Francis had taken to his nephew, found his presence pleasant, and so forgot the morbid dread of seeing him, which had haunted him all these years, and grown into a giant which now seemed to be proving itself a windmill; while Olive, seeing her father cheerful, became so herself.

Meanwhile, Garde Wareham was silently taking note of his relations. He knew nothing of the

causes that had kept him and them apart, except that his father and Sir Francis had quarrelled about a year after his own birth, and that this was the reason his uncle had never seen him during his boyhood, never expressed any desire for his presence at the old home which must in time be his.

The young man did not blame Sir Francis as many in his place—especially if as hot-headed and impetuous as himself—would have done. Mrs. Wareham had always insisted to her boy that Sir Francis had behaved well and generously; and Garde himself knew that his father had been reckless and extravagant, and had run through his slender portion long before his death, so that Garde and his mother had ever since been dependent on Sir Francis.

He was grateful to his uncle for his kindness, glad to owe to him the pleasant memories of Rugby and Balliol; but feeling himself now able to stand alone, he wished to do so. In the letter to his uncle, in which he had announced his intention of joining this African exploration expedition as a botanist in the pay of the Botanic Society, he likewise told Sir Francis, in a manly modest way in which there was much gratitude and little presumption, that he hoped now to be able to support himself, and felt it would not be fair if he let his uncle continue his allowance any longer. It was this letter, though he did not know it, which had won for him the invitation to Wareham.

And now he was there in the old home of his family, in which he yet seemed to have neither part nor lot. Sir Francis was much what he had been prepared to find him from his mother's descriptions, both in manner and appearance; but the girls, his cousins, had been a sweet and fresh surprise.

In truth, the 'three kings' daughters fair,' as Val, and from him Rose Storton, were fond of calling Olive and her sisters, were a very lovely triad of English maidens, and so Garde thought. Bertie had the most regular claims to the golden apple; neither of her sisters owned her large long-lashed eyes, dewy fresh, and the colour of heliotrope in shade, her wonderful delicate beauty of colouring, her rippling weight of brown hair, her flower-like face. May was dark, clear tinted, with a warm flush on her cheek, and eyes like the waters of a dark still pool shadowed by October boughs.

Olive was different from both May and Bertie, with her fair face, which deepened when she spoke, the serious sweetness of her lips, the strange beauty of her large soft eyes, which smiled more often than her mouth did. If any artist had painted a picture of the 'three kings' daughters fair' from these models, it would have been the eldest of the living maidens he would have chosen for the youngest princess.

'When do you leave for Africa?' Olive asked Garde, when Bertie, who sat on her cousin's other side, and had chiefly engrossed his attention, was for the moment engaged in a war of words with Val across the table.

'Next month.'

'How long will you be away?'

'Two or three years.'

'O?'

He laughed.

'Don't pity me. I think myself very fortunate.'

'I was thinking how your mother will miss you.'

His face changed.

'That is the worst,' he said. 'I'm not much; but I'm all she has.'

'I wonder she ever consented to let you go.'

He smiled rather quaintly.

'Vanity of vanities! all is vanity. One of the old fellows who offered me this chance thought that if he called on her without my knowing, and got over her by telling her of the *kudos* I should earn, she would not only give in, but work on their side. He was right enough, too; ever since she has been the fiercest in persuading me to go.'

'O, she must be good,' said Olive impulsively.

'She is,' Garde answered, a fond tender pride in his tone. 'I wonder,' he said, after a short pause, 'whether you think me a great brute for leaving her, even though she says she wishes it?'

'No,' answered Olive; 'I am sure it is hard to you.'

'Thank you,' was all his reply; but it gave her a glimpse of himself.

'I wish I were going with you, Garde,' said Bertie, with reckless frankness, being worsted in her engagement with Val; 'I should enjoy it, I know, camping out, and going out lion-hunting on a giraffe.'

'It strikes me,' said her father, 'that your ideas are borrowed from the *Bon Gaultier Ballads*.'

Bertie made a wholly indescribable movement of her head, half pettish, half amused, all pretty.

'It's very annoying,' she said, 'I never know if I'm quoting from "Locksley Hall" or the parody; isn't it a bother?' she asked, turning to her cousin.

'Yes,' said Garde, watching her with the interest and amusement one takes in a pretty child showing itself off for one's benefit.

The girls were not long by themselves in the drawing-room after dinner. When Sir Francis and the two young men joined them, Olive was standing by the window, of which the curtains had not been drawn, looking at the night sky.

The wind had swept the rain away, and the moon had risen in a great, clear, dark heaven, across which sailed giant masses of inky cloud, touched at the edges to a vivid splendour of silver, caught from the shining moon.

Garde went up to Olive, and his eyes took the same road as did hers. It was some moments before either spoke, and in the mean time their gaze had come down from the mighty sky to the dim dark woods, bowing their heads to the wind, the ghostly sweeps of meadowland, and, nearer, to the old-fashioned gardens, laid out in Elizabeth's time, and reminding one of Bacon's garden, though not quite large enough to satisfy that sage's royal demands.

'What a lovely old place Wareham seems to be!' said Garde.

'Is it not?' said the girl eagerly. 'You will see the gardens of-morrow, and the river, and the cedars, and—but perhaps you don't care for such things.'

'Try me; what is it?'

She laughed.

'I was only going to tell you of my especial pride in the garden, a real musk-rose tree.'

'"Mid-May's eldest child!" I don't know that I have ever seen one; is it different from other roses?'

'It is very rare now, the real old-fashioned musk-rose, very white and delicate, with a sweet strange scent, that you don't feel so much if you smell it closely as if you have it in your hand, or in the room where you sit. You very seldom find it in these days, except now and then in old gardens like this, where no modern gardeners have been at work.'

He looked at her: the secret of a smile in his eyes. 'Very rare,' he said; 'but you do find it now and then in old gardens like Wareham.'

He could not help saying it;

but he was too much of a gentleman to let the meaning be apparent to her or any one except himself.

'I think,' she said, 'our tree must have been planted in Shakespeare's time. It is a bending, twisted tree of long slender boughs; and in June it is—O, so sweet, with its white blossoms. I wish you could see it.'

'I shall be far away, I am afraid, before it is in bloom.'

Their attention was distracted by a trio being commenced at the piano—the performers being Val, Rose, and May; and after an imaginary baby had been well hushed, and the audience informed that the hardy Norseman's home of yore was on the foaming wave, Bertie asked Garde if he could sing, and on extorting a confession from him to that effect, immediately prepared to accompany him.

He sang well, in a true unforced manner, and like an artist, though without the finish and perfection which can only come of a life devoted to the art. Still his voice was pleasant to listen to; and when Olive had gone up to bed, she found herself brooding over the cadences of 'Freisinn' and 'Ich grolle Nicht,' as she had heard them that evening rendered by Garde's strong sweet tones.

CHAPTER III.

'OLIVE!' said May.

'Well!'

'Don't you think—'

Here May seemed somewhat embarrassed and stopped short.

'What is it?' asked her sister. 'Can't you manage the trimming? May being engaged in some device of millinery.'

'O Olive, how stupid you are!' exclaimed May, in a tone of pet-

tish despair. 'I wasn't thinking about the trimming; I was thinking— Did you see Bertie and Garde pass the window?'

'Yes; they had been to the stables. Bertie wanted to take Ruby a slice of bread.'

'If you won't notice things, you won't. Don't you think those two are growing fond of each other?'

'What do you mean?' For all Olive could do, she could hardly govern her tone of sharp pain and surprise.

May lifted her eyebrows slightly.

'What I say,' she answered. 'Hasn't it occurred to you this last day or two?'

'No,' was all Olive could answer.

'I believe you live in a dream,' said her sister. 'But don't you think it would be very nice?'

'Perhaps—no—it would never do.'

'Why not?' asked May, with unfeigned amazement.

'Papa wouldn't like it.'

The words escaped Olive's lips; then she was afraid she had said too much.

'Why shouldn't he? He doesn't want us to marry money; he likes Garde, and I am sure he would like to think of one of us being still mistress here, when—'

'Don't!' gasped Olive; 'I can't bear it!'

'Look there,' said May, pointing to where Bertie and her cousin might be seen through the open window, near which May and Olive were sitting.

Bertie was fastening a little yellow rosebud in Garde's button-hole, her face raised to his bent-down one; and Olive could fancy well how perilously sweet and pretty her little sister must look to the young man's eyes.

'It is too disgraceful a flirtation. I feel bound to stop it, especially as you don't think papa

would approve,' said May, springing from her seat, and letting the various collection of millinery matters in her lap fall on the floor, as she stepped out through the window and went along the garden towards Bertie and Garde, shading her face with her hand from the bright sunshine of this morning in early June.

Another time, Olive's first instinct would have been to pick up the things May had left scattered on the floor; but to-day she let them stay where they had fallen, as she sat with clasped hands, looking out to where Garde and her sisters stood.

They moved away out of her sight; but she could still hear their voices. A quiet low sound broke from her, which might have been a sigh, but was very like a sob.

May had unwittingly touched the truth when she spoke of her sister living in a dream. For the last week Olive had done so. During the eight days of Garde's visit Miss Wareham had been sweetly, carelessly happy; so happy, that she had forgotten to think or reason, had forgotten her father's charge to her, her own shyness of Garde, everything.

And now she was awake; the whole world was changed, and she knew the reason—knew that she loved her cousin, the one man her loyalty to her father bound her not to love.

Had some strange, desperate, wicked feeling taken possession of her, that she felt as though her father's displeasure and pain were nothing to her; as though, if Garde had loved her, and asked her to come to him, she must have done so, in spite of her father's anger and sorrow and reproach?

But the temptation was not hers—she saw that now, revealed by May's words. Garde did not

care for her in the way she cared for him. He would talk to her earnestly and kindly; but his smiles, his brightness, the winning gladness of his manner, these were for Bertie.

The thing Sir Francis had dreaded had surely come to pass. If Olive had still been heart-whole, she would have done her best to serve her father's purposes; but in the light of the knowledge of what her own feelings would have been had Garde loved her, she felt she should be worse than a hypocrite if she preached submission and obedience to Bertie—Bertie, who had not known the story which should have made Olive herself guard her heart closely. Only she had never thought of there being any danger for her.

Things being as they were, Olive saw only one course open to her: when her sister and cousin avowed their love, she must use such influence as she might have with her father to induce him to yield; and if that were of no use, must counsel Bertie by the light of her own heart.

She had rushed rather impetuously at conclusions, as a loving and generous woman, who has lived much in other's lives, is apt to do when the conclusions point to her own unhappiness. Yet it did not cost Olive a little to determine to do what she saw to be right. She fought fiercely, but bravely, with herself, as she sat by the open window, the June roses and the sunlight seeming to mock her by their brightness.

'Olive, I want to tell you something.'

She started, almost shivered, at the sound of Garde's voice; he stood close to her outside the window, holding a letter in his hand.

'You know when your father asked me to stay here a few days longer instead of leaving to-mor-

row, I said I couldn't, because I knew my mother would want me for the last fortnight; but I've just got this letter by the second post to say that the expedition is delayed ten days in starting. Do you think uncle Francis would let me change my mind, and remain here two or three days more?'

He spoke eagerly and rapidly, his face bright, his eyes fixed on hers. She answered heartily, 'I am sure he will;' and then a slight pang shot through her, of doubt if she were acting fairly by the father who trusted her.

She had never found it hard to know the right before; but she did now.

'So I may see your musk-rose in bloom, after all,' said Garde.

'You may see it now,' she said. 'Three of the buds were blown this morning; I suppose these sunny days have brought them out.'

She was putting a strong effort on herself; but she succeeded in it, and he noticed nothing different in her manner to him from what it usually was, with the shade of sweet reserve which was lovely in his eyes.

'You have never shown me the tree yet,' he said. 'Won't you do so now? Where is it?'

'It is down in the orchard,' she said, rising; and the two went down the turf paths of the garden, crushing the wild thyme and burnet under foot, and enjoying the fragrance of the great clove carnations, that 'came and went in the air like music,' and the remembered sweetness of which haunted Garde in after days.

'Is it "inside my father's close," this musk-rose of yours?' said Garde, as Olive swung back the gate of the orchard.

'You are as bad as Val,' answered Miss Wareham, smiling.

'Why do you both persist in quoting that ballad?'

'I don't know; because it is a pleasant rhyme, and links you in our thoughts with the ladies of past years.'

'This is a better link with past years,' she said, as they stood beneath the slender wreathed stems of the musk-rose tree; on one of the swaying branches of which shone three silvery blooms, 'Keats' and Shakespeare's own flower.'

She bent down the flowering branch to her, and moved her face near the delicate blossoms, as though with a subtle caress. There did seem an affinity between her and her favourite rose, as she stood there in her white dress, the sunshine falling on her bright uncovered hair.

Garde did not ask for, or even gather one of, Olive's favourite flowers, as another man might have done. Bertie's yellow bud was still in his buttonhole, depriving him of his only valid excuse for making a request for one, even had he wished to do so.

But he did not; he loitered back with Olive to the house, and then—

He returned to the orchard, and gathered that one of the roses which had touched Olive's cheek!

For a moment or two he held it, looking at it with a musing smile before he bestowed it carefully away in the fat pocket-book which was to accompany him on his African wanderings.

'Very rare,' he thought to himself—'very delicate and white, with a sweet strange scent, which penetrates your life. You very seldom find it now, except in old gardens like this. She was quite right; apple-blossom grows in every orchard, "so sweet;" but you rarely find a musk-rose blooming in the close with it, and when you do—'

Garde's conclusions were his own; as a rule, his sex prefers the bright red and white of the apple-bloom.

CHAPTER IV.

'YOUR last whole day here, really now, Garde,' said Bertie at breakfast a week later. 'You'll come for a last ride to-day, won't you?'

'Of course if you like,' said Garde. 'Will you come?' he added, turning to Olive, who was pouring out coffee at the head of the breakfast-table.

A gleam of pleasure lit Olive's eyes, but died away again.

'I don't think I can,' she answered; 'there is a good deal to do just now.'

'The first instalment of strawberry-jam,' said Bertie, laughing. 'Do you know, Garde, Olive never can leave our family jars to the housekeeper. She is a true Martha, but I approve of her care over the jam.'

'And of its results,' said Garde, as Bertie helped herself to a large slice of bread and an equally goodly proportion of apricot marmalade by way of commencing her breakfast.

'I wonder when papa and May are coming down,' said Bertie. 'I can't think what makes them so late. There is May, though,' as her sister entered the room.

'O, papa isn't down yet!' said May, as she took her seat. 'Haven't the letters come?'

'You've got into such a habit of looking out for the post while Val is away,' returned Bertie, with sisterly frankness, 'that you do it now when you can't expect anything. However, here are papa and the letters together.'

'Five for you, Garde,' said Bertie, as she passed her cousin's correspondence down the table to

him. 'I should think answering your letters would take all your time if you did it properly.'

Garde laughed; four of his epistles he read or rather glanced over; the fifth, which was in his mother's handwriting, he put unread in his pocket.

'I suppose you are going to have your morning cigar now,' remarked Bertie, when breakfast was over, and the three girls and their cousin had strolled out on the lawn. 'I wish I smoked.'

'So do I,' said Garde; 'I should enjoy my weed much more if we smoked in company.'

'Will you let your wife smoke?'

'I shouldn't think of letting her or not letting her,' said Garde. 'She would do as she pleased.'

'What a model husband!' returned Bertie ironically; 'and would you—'

Her catechism was stopped short by May's saying,

'Bertie, if you have quite finished talking nonsense—'

'But I haven't,' muttered her sister rebelliously.

'Will you come in and practise that duet with me? I want to have it ready this evening for Val.'

'How nice it is to have an engaged sister!' murmured Bertie sweetly, looking after May, as the latter went indoors. 'Because a certain duet gives her future lord and master pleasure, I must weary my fingers and lose the best part of the morning practising. *Ohe sara, sara.* I suppose Olive has gone off to her strawberries already. What a good girl she is! and she really enjoys idleness more than any of us.'

'More than you yourself?'

'Much more,' answered Bertie earnestly, and looking prettier than herself. 'You don't know, Garde, how hard Olive's life has really been. She has been working for us all ever since we were

children, never enjoying herself as May and I have done; she has always had too much to think of.'

'Perhaps, after all, her life has been fuller than yours,' said Garde, looking at the pretty human humming-bird by him.

'I don't know,' she answered; 'but life could be more beautiful to Olive than to May or me, because she has so much more in her.'

Then Bertie went into her music, and Garde was left alone.

He knew it was true, that which Bertie had said. He wished—O, how passionately!—that he could give Olive's life a wider brightness and fairness than its placid course had yet known. 'Calm's not life's crown, though calm is well; life's crown is—love.'

But could he give her such love as she would accept? was she a woman to give her heart away quickly? He had only known her a fortnight, yet loved her well enough to feel all life would be changed to him if he held however distant a hope of winning her. But she—was it likely that she would see in him anything worth the loving? and if she did, was it fair in him to ask her to wait for him through the years of his absence?

Something in his own heart answered these questions; his bosom's lord sat lightly on its throne in spite of himself.

'My Olive,' he thought, as he strolled down to the orchard; 'how she and the mother would love each other! By the way, I haven't read my letter.'

He drew it out of his pocket and opened it; the clear, fair handwriting was rather more troubled than was its wont, and the letter was a long one—two, three closely-written sheets.

'My dearest Garde,—What can I say? Your letter has been a

terrible shock. I ought to have warned you; it was cruel of me not to do so, yet I could not. But O, my poor boy, what you write of never could be, never can be, even if your cousin loves you, and I pray she may not.

'You do not know the reason, nor do I think she does, why a marriage between you and any of your uncle Francis's daughters would be impossible. It is the reason that has kept us apart from him and his all these years—why he and I, who were fond of each other once as if we had been brother and sister, dread to look at each other's faces. The reason I never thought to tell you, and yet, perhaps, you ought to have known long ago.'

Then Garde Wareham had to read the story of his father's pitiful sin, of his uncle's just anger; and reading it, he felt as though the daylight were blotted out of his life.

Was this ghastly thing true? had he lived so long without knowing of it, of this which must make life different for evermore? He felt dazed, stunned as with a great bewilderment of horror. He saw that Olive was lost to him for ever—that much was clear; but much remained behind of bad which he could not yet realise or comprehend.

He sat down on the stump of a tree in the orchard, from where his eyes could see the sprays of Olive's musk-rose waving in the sun; but he saw everything blindly, in a dull way. He was dimly groping in his own mind, striving to find the right, and to find strength, when he knew it, to do it.

He only felt at first as though there was no longer any right or wrong in the world.

He understood now what an effort it must have been to Sir Francis to ask him down to Ware-

ham—understood the bitter pain it must be to that proud man to know that he, Garde, the son of the man who had been the Warehams' shame, would some day own Wareham itself. So Garde sat there thinking, reasoning, battling with himself, the rival instincts of self-interest and self-sacrifice warring fiercely within him.

He was roused by the sound of the distant church clock striking eleven. Bertie would be ready for her ride and waiting for him. With a heavy sigh he rose and went slowly towards the house, where he found the horses at the door, but Bertie in her morning dress.

'O, I am so sorry, Garde! I have just sprained this wretched wrist of mine, and can't ride. I've been trying to persuade Olive to leave her jam-pots for this once and go with you.'

A strange light shone in his face.

'Will you?' he said, turning to Olive, who was standing near.

The tone, the look of the eyes, had a magnetic power over her.

'If you wish it,' she said quietly, and left the room to put on her habit.

Wish it! It was that, seeing it held out to him, he could not resist taking it, this one joy, the memory of which he could hold through the long years before him like the perfume of Olive's own musk-rose. He would say no word which should break the law he had laid down for himself; but this hour by her side, under the wide sky, away from all other people, he could not deny himself.

Neither spoke much during the ride; it was enough to be together; but strangely enough the rhythm of their horses' hoofs had set itself in the hearts of both of them to the same measure, that of Browning's 'Last Ride Together.'

'I said then, dearest, since 'tis so,
 Since now at last my fate I know,
 Since nothing all my love avails,
 Since all my life seemed meant for fails,
 My whole heart rises up to bless
 Your name in pride and thankfulness.
 Take back the hope you gave; I claim
 Only a memory of the same,
 And this beside, if you will not blame,
 Your leave for one last ride with you.

* * * *

I and my mistress, side by side,
 Shall be together, breathe and ride.'

So they rode on, their pulses
 beating to the music of the poem.

'Who knows but the world may
 end to-night?'

The words almost passed Garde's
 lips, but he checked them; for a
 moment his eyes met hers, then he
 looked away as under the pressure
 of an overmastering fear—a dread
 lest his weaker self should prevail.

CHAPTER V.

YET Olive had no suspicion of
 Garde's feeling for her. Through-
 out his visit his manner had been
 different with her from what it was
 with May and Bertie. It was the
 latter he had been most with, and
 who, true to her nature, had flirted
 with him like the little coquette
 she was. Olive ought to have
 known Bertie by this time—and
 so she did; but it seemed to her
 natural that Garde should be
 won by the bright ways and fresh
 face of the dainty wayward crea-
 ture, in whom childhood and
 womanhood mingled prettily.

Miss Wareham sat that evening
 in her own room after dinner.
 Her father and Garde were still
 in the dining-room. Val and
 Rose had just come up to Ware-
 ham, and were having a last game
 at lawn-tennis for that day with
 May and Bertie; so she had gone
 up-stairs unnoticed.

The soft dusk was creeping
 slowly over the land, veiling the

thick summer woods and the hap-
 py hayfields in the dim distance,
 and according well with Olive's
 thoughts as she sat in the twi-
 light, trying—O, how hardly!—to
 stifle the great pain which would
 weigh on her heart.

Garde was going away; he did
 not care for her, he never would
 care for her. It was only a fort-
 night since she had known him,
 only a week since she had known
 she loved him; and now she knew
 she should

'Never stand
 Serenely in the sunlight as before.'

She was sure he loved Bertie;
 but why did he not speak to Sir
 Francis? He knew nothing of the
 barrier between himself and Bertie,
 which Olive herself was deter-
 mined to overthrow if she could.

She felt a certain shame that
 in so short a time she should have
 yielded so completely. It was
 foolish, mad, to feel as she did—
 that, with her life apart from
 Garde's, she must always be haunt-
 ed by a wretched longing, a know-
 ledge that life might have been
 dearer, more beautiful, with 'an
 ampler ether, a diviner air,' than
 she had ever dreamt of during the
 four-and-twenty years of her life
 which had passed before she met
 Garde Wareham.

Meanwhile, down-stairs in the
 dining-room, Sir Francis and his
 nephew were sitting over their
 wine. There was more than a
 shadow of constraint and nervous-
 ness in Garde's manner; but the
 elder man did not perceive it, for
 he, too, was engrossed in his own
 thoughts.

He was surprised to find how
 much he liked his nephew and
 heir, the sight of whom he had
 avoided so long. How Garde
 brought back to him, not the
 Ralph who had cheated him, as
 he now believed—as, in his secret
 soul, he had believed all along,

and been angry with himself for believing—more from weakness than from vice, but the Ralph of earlier days; the brilliant sweet-tempered brother, his love for whom had had something womanly in its passion of tenderness.

Thinking thus, he glanced across the table to where Garde sat, and was a little startled by the expression of the young man's face. There was a look on it of brooding care, as though the man's heart were pressed down by a load too heavy for him to bear; but still in the lines of his face there was all—which his father's had lacked—the calm of endurance and resolution.

Sir Francis could not understand all this; but he did feel a certain quick spring of affection for the young man, and an anger against himself for not having known him earlier.

All this time Garde was pondering how to say what was in his mind, and finding it very difficult.

'I wish, Garde,' said Sir Francis, nervously fidgeting with his wineglass, 'I wish you would change your mind and let me help you with your outfit.'

Garde laughed.

'I don't need a very extensive one to carry into the middle of Africa. Besides, sir, you've done quite enough for me, and I'm grateful.'

'You've nothing to be grateful for. I've done little enough. Remember, Garde, you come here after me.'

What he would have liked to have done would have been to ask Garde to give up the idea of Africa altogether; but his pride prevented him.

'No, sir.'

'What do you mean? Surely you know Wareham is entailed?'

There was only one light in the room—a shaded lamp. Garde's

head was a little bent down, so that Sir Francis could not see his face, only the lamplight shining on his closely-curled head, so like Ralph's, as he answered slowly,

'I know all now, sir—since this morning. My mother has written and told me—all.'

'Why the deuce—' Sir Francis began, but stopped.

'She was quite right,' Garde went on. 'I ought to have known it long ago. I could hardly do right not knowing it. It all seems strange enough now.'

Sir Francis sat silent, pained to the heart by the agony he heard in Garde's controlled voice.

'I only know one thing, sir, that I can do: and that is, join with you in cutting off the entail.'

'What!'

'I know that my father has forfeited our right to Wareham; that your daughter Olive'—his voice sank ever so little as he spoke that name, never so dear to him as now—'has a better right to Wareham than I can have, with this black stain.'

It was quixotic, perhaps; but it was earnest and true, with a foolish generosity in it which went straight to Sir Francis's heart; for he knew Garde meant what he said, and would hold by his words.

'Garde, my poor boy'—Sir Francis went round to where the young man sat, and laid his hand on the broad shoulder—'I would have given Wareham itself that you shouldn't have known this; but it's all nonsense this idea of yours. Wareham goes with the title, and you can't give that up to Olive. But I'm proud of my heir.'

There was a choke in his voice; he felt as though Garde were his son—or rather he longed that he were.

'But, sir—'

'Don't think of the wretched

story,' said Sir Francis; 'it has been brooded over long enough. I believe your father did this blindly in one moment when he was hard pressed, and would have given his life to undo it.'

He left the room and came back in two or three minutes, a slip of paper in his hand.

'Here it is,' he said. 'I kept the cheque as a justification of myself; but now—'

He struck a light, and burnt the record of his brother's sin.

'Thank you,' said Garde, and the words meant much as he stretched out his hand to meet his uncle's; and in the close grasp which followed was buried the bitterest part of Sir Francis's burden. In the new trust and honour of Ralph's son he found it easier to forgive Ralph.

The door opened, and a fair head peeped in.

'Papa, how much longer are you and Garde going to stay here? It's a shame—on Garde's last night too!'

'We are coming in a moment, Bertie,' answered her father.

'I daresay,' answered Bertie; 'you must come at once.'

Sir Francis obeyed. As he looked at his bright-haired girl and Garde, he remembered his nervous dread a fortnight ago.

'I only wish now,' he thought, 'that he would show any inclination; I would trust one of my girls to his keeping safely and gladly.'

Garde lingered for a moment when Bertie and her father had left the room; a rush of warm hope had gladdened his heart.

'I will not ask for it now,' he thought; 'that would be encroaching too far. I must wait; and then—if she be not lost to me in the mean while—when I come back, I will dare in spite of everything.'

He rose and crossed the hall to

the drawing-room, the door of which was half open; through it he heard Olive's voice at the piano, and paused to listen unseen.

'Fly away, O my heart, away!
It's my true love, my own,

So sweet.

O, if he fight and win,
Fly away, O my heart, away!
I keep my love for him,

So sweet.

O, if he lose or win,
He hath it still complete.'

They were something for him to hold through absence, these words; a sweet incomplete promise; a bud which might blossom when he returned, if only—

But if he had known how wet Olive's cheeks were with salt tears that night, through the dark silent hours, it is doubtful if he would have kept his resolve, and parted with her as he did the next morning with only a pressure of the hand, and one long look at her face.

'Good-bye, Garde,' was Bertie's last adieu, called out as the dog-cart rolled down the avenue. 'Mind and bring me the Empress of Timbuctoo's necklace as a keepsake.'

CHAPTER VI.

'So Garde is due in England any day now.'

'Yes, papa had a letter from him at Aden. Did I tell you? He didn't show it to me; but he wrote off an answer to meet Garde at Marseilles, asking him to come straight down to Wareham when he arrived, and he would find his mother here.'

'Your father brings her back with him to-night, does he not?'

'Yes; Garde will be able to get here almost as quickly as he could to London.'

Olive, May, and Val were sitting, after their old wont of a

summer afternoon, under the apple-trees in the orchard. The time of the blossoms for this year—the third of Garde's absence—was over, and the fruit clustered, rosy, golden, and purple shaded crimson, on the old gnarled boughs. There was an important addition to the party under the trees, in the small person of Val and May's first baby, over which those young people made an insane and ridiculous fuss, only excusable on the ground that it was their first, and that they had only been married eighteen months.

They lived in London, but had come down to Wareham at the beginning of the vacation for Bertie's marriage, which had taken place about a month before this afternoon. For the last week they had been staying at the Rectory; but it did not make much difference, and during these three days, while Sir Francis was in London, May had been almost constantly with Olive.

Yet Olive felt the difference in her intercourse with her sister to what it had been before May's marriage. Things could never be quite the same again, and it was right that they should not. She had lost both her sisters, and the loss drew her and her father even nearer together than they had been before.

'There is Rose, from her round of cottage-visiting,' said May, as Miss Horton came to them through the thick grass. 'Just in time for tea.'

'And quite ready for it, I should think,' added Olive, as she handed Rose a cup; 'you must be exhausted, Rose.'

'I am rather,' answered Miss Horton, throwing aside her hat. 'Any news from Bertie?'

'Yes; she writes from Interlachen, says she is perfectly happy, and supposes George is the same,

as he doesn't say anything to the contrary. She is enchanted with Switzerland; they mean to go on to Italy, and won't return here till November; and if I still refuse to spend December with them in Grosvenor-crescent, she says you must be her first visitor instead of her second, Rose.'

'How nice of her!' said Rose, with placid satisfaction. 'It is so odd to think of Bertie as Lady Seaton, and a member's wife. May—'

'I know what you are going to say,' put in her brother; 'May didn't do half so well for herself.'

'Thru for you,' said his wife, laughing. 'It's your fault, Val, you provoked it. We ought to be going back now; it's six o'clock, baby's time for bed.'

'O, do stay a little longer,' pleaded Olive. 'You make yourself a perfect slave to that child.'

But May, though a sister, was also a young mother, and, baby being all-important, was adamantine in her resolution.

'I can't, dear, I wish we could; but why don't you come down with us to the Rectory? Papa and aunt Clara don't come till past nine, and you would have plenty of time to be back here when they arrive.'

Olive shook her head. 'I think I had better not. Are you going back by the fields?' as the others rose.

She walked with them to the orchard-gate, and stood by it, watching them as they crossed the fields towards the village. So she stayed there musing, enjoying the clear radiance of the August afternoon, the slumberous golden air, which glorified the whole scene; and her thoughts went back, back.

It was so strange to her to think she should really see Garde again. The thought of him had never died in her heart; had there been

any danger of its doing so, it would have been kept alive by the friendship which had grown up between herself and Garde's mother.

Mrs. Wareham was too true a woman to let any hint of her son's secret pass her lips, though she divined, what Garde himself had not, how much Olive cared for him, and how glad the faintest hint of his love would have made the girl. It was a sore temptation often to Clara Wareham; but she resisted it, knowing that it was Garde's own right, and his alone, to tell Olive of the secret hope and love he had borne away with him to Africa, and, as his mother believed, had kept safe and inviolate through these long three years.

As Olive's thoughts went back, she wondered whether it had been only her fancy, acting on May's idea, which had induced her to imagine a mutual feeling between Bertie and Garde. Certainly, whatever Bertie might have felt for her cousin, it had been only the shadow of a shade, brushed away by her next flirtation, forgotten in her happy marriage with grave blue-book-engrossed Sir George Seaton.

But Garde—had he really loved Bertie? had the news of her marriage, which he must have received at Gibraltar, made him unhappy? or had he entirely forgotten her amid the hardships of African travel?

He had made a name for himself by two or three botanical discoveries of great value and interest, besides lesser ones; and Olive, who hardly knew the difference between the stamen and the pistils of a flower, was proud of the fame he had won, and would scan the driest scientific journals in the hope of meeting with a passing mention of his name.

Yet she fancied she could meet him calmly now, without either pain or that swift throb of joy his voice used to cause in her.

'Olive! Olive! is it you?'

She turned. There was a figure at the gate, bright in the westering sun: a man, very brown and thin and tall. For a moment she doubted, with a sick faint feeling of utter wonder; then she gasped, 'O Garde, you have come!'

He had taken both her hands in his, and was scanning her face as though he had a right to do so, born of his long thoughts of her, and the love he had kept close to his heart throughout his absence.

She was a little thinner, a little paler; perhaps the very first freshness of the tints was gone; but the years had brought and added loveliness of gentler sweetness. Garde saw no difference, only he thought his memories of her had done her an injustice: she was fairer than he had known.

'They told me at the house that you were in the orchard,' he said, 'and that uncle Francis and my mother are expected by the late train. We arrived a day earlier than we thought we should.'

So they sat and talked under the trees, telling and hearing news, till at last the fading light warned Olive of the flight of time.

'O, I had forgotten!' she said. 'You must be so hungry, and there is no dinner ordered—only a non-descript meal for aunt Clara and papa when they arrive.'

'I don't want dinner,' said Garde; 'I dined early at Southampton, off a pile of chops. I couldn't eat anything if you ordered it.'

So Olive, her hospitable thoughts thwarted, sat down again, not unwillingly, and watched the long line of purple cloud in the amber west kindle to crimson and burn to vivid red, till it faded to faint

sweet rose, and died at last, a bank of golden mist in the paler gold of the sky.

'You don't mean to leave England again?' she said at last.

'I don't know; it all depends.'

'O Garde, you must not! Your mother has missed you so terribly.'

'Then I shall stay for her sake; but it will be hard unless—'

'Unless what?' asked Olive innocently.

'Olive,' he said quickly, 'I did not mean to speak so soon, and I may lose all by doing so, but I cannot help it—I cannot stay by you and not know if—if—'

Slowly she understood, but she was quite silent and still; the strong reaction made her feel deathly cold and faint.

'You don't understand, you don't care for me—I have made a mistake. O Olive, if you only knew how I have loved you all these years!'

'You!' she turned and looked at him; then it was as though something, which had till now held them apart, snapped, and Olive felt her lover's kiss and knew how blind and foolish she had been.

'You never told me,' she said; then she remembered and under-

stood the reason; for her father had long ago told her of Garde's knowledge of his father's sin, and of the young man's wish that the entail should be cut off.

She had loved him all the better for this, but never so well as she did now, when she knew all that the cruel secret had caused both him and her to suffer.

'Cannot you guess why?' he answered. 'If I had not learnt of that, I should have told you three years ago. But I vowed to be silent at least till I returned. I wrote to your father at Aden to ask his leave to win you—if I could.'

'And he said—'

'"Yes." Olive, you have not said it yet.'

Instead of words she laid her hand in his: a full answer—the hand of a loyal and loving woman.

He bent his lips and kissed it, then drew his arm round her closely, tenderly; and Olive, as she let her hand rest in his, the mute symbol of a perfect faith, felt for the first time the full gladness of her girlhood, the crowning sweetness which its earlier years had missed, and which had come now to give her womanhood a serene joy.

ETHEL COXON.

TÊTE-À-TÊTE.

'Yes! I was in love once.' This is in answer to a remark of Jack's this evening—Jack, who thinks his aunt the wisest, cleverest, most to be trusted of all human beings. Jack is one-and-twenty, with the eye of a hawk and hands like Dick Christian's. He only wants experience to make him as good a man across country as—an average first whip. When shall we do justice to the riding of our hunt servants?

There he lies, poor Jack, on the sofa in my dressing-room for a couple of hours every evening; and it was when I was presiding at his six-o'clock tea that we came to the edge of a confidence; and when I left him, with compunction, to go down to my own comfortable dinner, the expression of his face followed me, and I thought I would write out for him the story I could not trust myself to relate clearly enough or consecutively enough to make it worth listening to. 'It is not much of a thing, after all,' he said—'a dislocated knee; only I wish they would not diet me and make me keep so still. Why, auntie, you must have broken every bone in your body, if what people say is true. Everything except your heart, I suppose,' added Jack, lifting his eyes to mine. 'O no, Jack!' I said, 'fame always exaggerates. I only once broke my arm and a couple of fingers, though I put out my shoulder, and its getting out, after the way of shoulders, twice or so every season makes a pretty good cry of woe. But I broke my heart, Jack, many years ago, and that never heals.'

And then I left him, lying patiently enough in the firelight, thinking there should not even be that secret between my heir and myself, if it would interest him or wife away a tedious hour. But O, Jack, I wish it had not been Paladin that came down with you so awkwardly! I believed in that horse as I do not believe in many things now. Well, people say it is unlucky to name a second child after a lost one; perhaps it is to show us how out of place sentiment is in the working of the world, though sentimentality is hardly a fault of this generation. I called Paladin after an earlier Paladin who figures in my tale, and the weakness is rewarded.

He came to me with his name, which was a longer one than my father affected in his stable. He was by a plater called Palestine, well over my weight, which was never much above nine stone in the saddle, and a perfect hunter. I rode him on the hardest day I ever lived through, and he was less tired than I at the end of it.

Twenty years ago my father took a hunting-box in a country I will call the Copshire. It was new to both of us, but to me, who had never hunted out of this neighbourhood before, a perfectly fresh experience. The Copshire had a reputation as a staunch pack, and Mr. Chitty, who hunted them at that time, was said to be, and I should think justly, the best Master on a cold scent in England. Long days were the Copshire specialty. I should

think there never was a pack turned out, to be turned out well, with less display; everything was workmanlike, but almost affectedly quiet, and neat to a degree. Its detractors said the pack was slow. All I can say in answer, by the light of later experience, is that horseflesh did not go far with the Copshire. Once a week was enough for some horses, and three times a fortnight with Mr. Chitty meant a good one. He hunted four days a week, and my father's rule for me as a lightweight was that I should never have a second horse out. You have sometimes been pleased to praise my judgment in riding, Jack; I learnt the trick with the Copshire.

I was twenty-three, and had never cared for anything but riding, nor for any man except my father and the lost brother who had died in my arms years before down in that dreary chalk-pit into which I so nearly followed him, over the hedge instead of round by the cart track. His death saved my life; but I will not speak of that, unworthy substitute as I must always be of the cleverest, pluckiest, cheeriest Yorkshireman who ever stretched a stirrup-leather.

We had been at Heever about a week, and made acquaintance with some members of the hunt. We had dined with the Master, an old friend of my father's, and I remember I had asked my next neighbour the name of a horseman whose mount, a ragged hip-ped flat-legged gray, had struck my eye at the covert-side that morning. He told me it was Davidson, a name well known at that time in commerce. The young man in question was reputed heir to a fabulous fortune, and was a 'thorough good fellow,' added my informant. He told me Mr. Davidson had been some

weeks in Copshire, but was about changing his quarters; and I think he then said that he had had a stud of ten horses at Melton the previous season, chosen for use, not for show; and that Mr. Davidson's weight necessitated high prices for anything that could carry him as forward as he usually rode. But this I may have learnt afterwards. I am quite sure that when, the following morning, I found myself side by side with the subject of our conversation, in a good start we made together from Holmstrey Furze, he was to me a name, and nothing more.

He appeared to be about six-and-twenty, a long-legged, loosely-made, fair man, who rode with his stirrups long and a cutting whip. One supposed, without thinking about the matter, that he must have had a certain reputation to justify the solecism. He was on a roan that day, a horse I could recognise at this distance of time, if it were in the nature of weight-carriers to hunt through twenty seasons. His extraordinary length of hind leg, equally divided between above and below the hock, and resembling nothing I have ever seen in field or picture, unless it were Eclipse—and about the shoulders the likeness to Eclipse ceased—would have made the horse conspicuous anywhere. But taken in conjunction with a singular flatness of hoof and thickness of pastern, it constituted almost a deformity. On a steeple-chase course the horse would have found fanciers; but the taste that could purchase such an animal as a hunter, and ride him in rather a cramped and light-going country, must have been exceptional. Not that he was bad forward. His shoulder, when you could withdraw your eyes from his hind-quarters, showed an average slope

and height, and the narrowness before the saddle might only be conspicuous through the width of loin; but that width of loin and the length of his hind-legs were such that, had the horse been accurately proportioned to it, he would have stood worth a thousand guineas as a hunter up to twenty stone. As it was, one wondered how any horseman could keep him on his legs or himself on his back; while if Nature or his breaker had cursed him with a disposition to kick, no mortal who ever wore scarlet would have found backers on himself in a contest with his horse. Such, and I may add mahogany tops as a part of the rider's equipment—not common at that date—was my companion for a few hundred yards of steady going. Then our views of the line diverged, and our course in conformity with them. Hounds were sailing along before me over a large unenclosed heathy stretch of common-land; and as my horse settled down into his stride after the rasper that had introduced us to it, I looked round for my father. Behind me rode the feather-weight groom, who had preceded us to covert, and there exchanged my father's hunter for the smart little bay he had ridden from home. This groom was sent out with me as a special guide in the unknown country, with what success in that capacity will be shown in the sequel. At home I had rarely any escort except my father. Few studs are so large but that the saving of one horse on a day when three others must be out is a consideration; but until I knew my way about Copshire, in the exceedingly probable contingency of my father's line and my own deviating, I was to be closely attended.

My father was out of sight.

In front of me was the pack and executive; behind them two or three flyers; level with me the bulk of the field. There was a little skirting going on down wind, and my friend of the start was steering in that direction for some point unknown to me; but I looked in vain for my father. Paladin was pulling a little—the breezy heath roused all his energies; and between him and the total strangeness of the landscape I found occupation for my faculties. We had ridden seven miles to covert in a direction new to us, and hounds were taking us away both from home and kennels. I had caught a momentary sight of the fox. He was a bob-tailed brute, who looked ugly enough and awkward enough to be appropriate to the 5th of November, and the 5th itself was a damp and sunless day, with just a touch of east in the wind that rendered rain unlikely, and made the heaviness of the air scentingly genuine. Here was paradise! The original of the word, we are told with singular appropriateness, was a hunting park, an Eastern form of the Conqueror's New Forest; and this was one of its successors. Nimrod, in his paradise, never had under him a horse that felt less like tiring, more immortal, in those pre-historic days of heroes and equine wonders—never before him a stauncher pack (did not his hounds, being Eastern, hunt by sight?)—never beneath him springier turf, never above him a more beneficent sky.

No sign of a check, and the edge of the heath drawing near. How steeply the ground slopes down to the meadow-land, and surely that is water below in the valley! Yes, water; and beyond it pastures, stiffly fenced smallish enclosures, the hedges mostly

raised on banks, an idea new to me in practice, though not in theory. That stream must be the Wayne, and that distant sweep of mist the smoke of Cardington, fifteen miles from home. Now for the brook! Already some dissolutions of partnership between man and horse. Hardly a brook, though; its steep banks diminish the width to a distant view, and the pace is too great for picking and choosing.

Hold up, old man! Well flown! And now we are forward, and I get a little pull upon my horse's head. Alas for Bob Somers, the feather-weight groom! Do I not remember the brown horse was never good at water, and was selected for his riding to-day as we are on the Holmstrey side, and water scarce? Good-bye, Bob! Your horse is in, as I see, and you out. Safe enough, therefore, and I must trust as an escort to my father, who, in the nick of time, draws up to my girths, and volunteers the remark that the river has thinned the field. He also congratulates me on my start; it has taken him all he knows to be where he now is with a bad one; and then is silent. After a while I catch sight of my friend on the roan, and am going to draw my father's attention to the horse, when I find he is out of ear-shot; nor do I see him again for many hours. Where are we now? On the plough at last. What a nasty bit of country! This is holding clay-land, a singular contrast to the light soil we have left, and it is beginning to tell. Ten miles if a yard, and never a check, and the fences quite strong enough, though negligence gives an occasional and grateful gap. The pace is slower, though, and here and there is a stain of sheep. What sorry-looking cultivation! what poor

small turnips! Then there is some bad land and some bad farming in Copshire?

We are skirting a village; a distant woodland shows duskily through the heavy air. A check at last! I am the only lady up, and the field has dwindled to half its numbers. The Master tries a backward cast. Was that Fugleman? Speak to it, Fugleman! But Fugleman is already ashamed of his indiscretion. Ah! Baronet has it! Ugly black hound that he is, it would be difficult to match the keenness of that blunt unshapely nose.

Danglebury Wood. It is a big covert of eighty acres or so, and we run straight through it; and then we are out of the valley again, and heading for the moorland. Where are we, I wonder? I have lost direction, points, everything but the tailing pack. The pace is getting very slow. Horses—who often, thanks to their riders, tire so much sooner than hounds—are growing few. The bruisers, who confide so deeply in their second horses, are out of it altogether. It has come to a time when a light weight, temperateness, and the best oats are the three factors of existence. The second whip's horse is failing; the Master is beginning to look where he will 'have it.' Besides myself and the rider of the roan there are only two more with hounds. Good luck! The Master's horse is flagging; stumbling in a grip, he comes heavily to the ground, and rolls over. I am a furlong in the rear, nursing as best I may the failing powers of my horse. 'Carry it on, Will!' I hear the Master shout, and the first whip holds them on the line. The Master has got his horse up and turned his head to the wind, and Mr. Davidson is by his side. I pass them, wondering how long

we can live. Every grip now is a brook, every bank to be reckoned as an oxer. But we have something more in us yet. Ah, the roan again! But he has changed hands. 'Something like a sportsman that!' shouts the Master, as he gives me the go-by.

On to the open moor at last! A glorious sweep of landscape, the hollows soft with mist, the knolls tufted with firs. Far, far away the remnants of the pack—a roan horse, a brown, a gray. The Master, Sir Barry Becke, and Will Flack are alone with the hounds.

I have come to a trot long ago, and now it is a walk. I pull up and watch them—away, out of sight. It is over for me. Where am I? What am I to do? I look at my watch—four o'clock on a fading November afternoon—four hours and a half. Good horse! I begin walking him slowly on. Hark! is that a whoop? Have I missed it by so little? The moist air might carry the sound two miles or more to-day, especially up to this height. It is over, then, and for us all there is only our way home to find. I have to get off the moor, that is all I know; but meanwhile, my best—indeed my only—chance is to catch sight again of the pack. How fast the twilight comes on! What was that that drew a start from my tired horse? A hound slipping by in the dusk—a tail-hound. His line must be mine. Come up, old Paladin! Let us get off this uncertain dangerous moorland, and we shall find habitations and a guide.

Dark already! Paladin, I must trust to you, for I can see or guess at nothing more. I can suppose my way lies generally westward, and the wind this morning was south-east, while you are taking me up wind. Never mind, you

are my only chance. Hold up! how dangerous this stony ground is! Shall we never strike a road? or are there none in these wilds? This is downhill, surely a track of some kind. That is well, at any rate; gruel for you, old horse, and the chance of home at midnight. Too dark now even to see the time. Was that a church clock? No; I believe I am actually tired, and that was no real sound. Down, down; a stumble into a road. The result is worth the fright, for the game horse has saved himself despite fatigue, and already steps more gaily. Still down. We must reach the valley at last, when it will be a question what valley it is. Copsire abounds in valleys.

Black darkness now, and out of the darkness a voice. 'Hi! friend! Can you tell me anything of the hounds?'

The speaker is on foot, and the accent is that of a gentleman. I pull up close to the voice, and answer, 'I left them an hour ago, still running. I think they killed on the open moor.'

'I beg your pardon—' A pause, and then—'Your horse must be beat; my house is a couple of miles away, and there is not a roof between us and it. You'll come on?'

'Thank you. I have no notion where we are.'

'Somewhere near Hellgate, I believe. My house is Hellgaton Lodge, when we get there.'

Hellgate was a rapid on the Upper Wayne; that was all I knew.

'Have you lost your horse?' I asked at hazard.

'I mounted the Master; it seems a sin such a run should not be finished.'

'Mr. Davidson?'

'My name is Davidson. don't know yours, but I feel sure

you are the lady on the bay thoroughbred.'

'O yes! Pray tell me about that odd-looking roan. He must be a wonder.'

And so comradeship was established between us; and talking on congenial subjects we reached Hellgaton after nearly an hour's walking. A long dark avenue, then a hall-door, a servant, and lights.

'Barnes, take this horse and let Jim see to him; I will be round myself in a few minutes.'

Barnes was open-mouthed, but obedient.

'In here, please;' and my host pushed open the door of a dining-room, where the cloth was laid for dinner, and a banked-up fire was shedding a half-light on panelled walls. Mr. Davidson stirred the fire and rang the bell.

'I can't send you a lady's maid,' he said, 'for I am a bachelor; but my housekeeper will attend to you, whilst I see after your horse. My groom is a good man, and I will bring you news of him in a few minutes. Please come near the fire, you must be cold.'

We were excellent friends, though we only faced each other for the first time by the light of the roused fire. How comfortable it looked! sufficiently to make one almost regret the many miles of foot-pace riding that lay between oneself and home.

'Mrs. Jones, this lady has lost her way out hunting, and must rest here. Will you get her everything she can want, and send dinner up as quickly as possible?'

I protested. 'Indeed, my horse will get cold. I must take him on the moment he has finished his gruel.'

My heart failed me as I spoke, we must be so many miles from home.

'Where do you live?' asked Mr. Davidson.

'At Heever.'

'Heever! Twenty miles off!'

'Twenty miles!' I said, aghast.

'What am I to do?'

There was a moment's pause which I broke

'If you could lend me a groom I think my horse could take me home; he is not dead-tired.' I paused for a suggestion from him.

'Impossible!' he said; 'you won't have the horse out again under a fortnight if you ride him home to-night. Besides, I will go out and see what arrangements can be made. You must dine here, and no doubt I shall be able to borrow something to drive you home in. Unfortunately my own stables are empty.'

He looked puzzled, and then saying he would send me news of Paladin, consigned me to the care of his housekeeper, and went out into the yard.

Mrs. Jones was loquacious, curious, and hospitable. When Mr. Davidson refused to consider my stay as more than one of a quarter of an hour's duration, she took me to her sitting-room, and gave me a cup of tea; and having learnt what my circumstances were, proceeded to lament that, as Mr. Davidson's stud had been sent on to Melton, there was only at the moment one horse in the stables besides the hunter he had ridden and lent, and that a covert hack that had done a five-and-twenty miles stage that morning. By the time I had learnt this and a few more details, Barnes came with a message from his master, representing that if I would do him the honour of remaining an hour, dinner should be served at once, and a conveyance procured from the village for my return immediately afterwards, as my horse was certainly unfit for a

long journey home. As the village was a couple of miles off, and nothing but park and moorland surrounded this lonely house, a delay was inevitable; so I resigned myself to Mrs. Jones's motherly care, had a bath, dressed my hair with implements that would have nonplussed any lady's-maid, and came down to the dining-room with a sense of humour uppermost in my mind.

Among the many definitions of a gentleman, all failing more or less from the subtlety of the subject, I have not seen the idea quoted that the crucial test of a man's breeding is his behaviour to a woman in unusual circumstances. Looked at in the abstract, as I looked at it afterwards, my position as Mr. Davidson's enforced guest was open to the charge of either *gêne* or awkwardness. The fact that beyond a feeling of amusement and a strong sense of novelty in sitting *tête-à-tête* with a stranger at his own table, and talking familiarly to him whom I had never met until a couple of hours before, no other impression was upon me, is the highest tribute to the breeding, the gentleman-hood of my host. Later I thought it the strangest experience of my life; at the time the oddest part of the situation seemed to be dining in a habit and knee-boots. It was a charming dinner, reflecting credit both on Mrs. Jones, who cooked, and Barnes, who served it, and during its courses I learnt many little particulars of Mr. Davidson's life. He was the only son of an indulgent father, whose fortune was made and continued invested in trade, and whose pride it was that his child should be one of the consuming class, and entirely separated from business and its connections. I suppose it was the hereditary energy turned into

a gentlemanlike channel that had made Mr. Davidson the fine sportsman he was; but a natural gift could only account for the polished courtesy, the generous and delicate feeling, that characterised all he did or said. Of this I heard testimony borne long after, by men far his superiors in birth and association, who had known him in that land of exclusiveness sporting and social—the Shires.

Yes, it was a delightful dinner, possibly because of the mutual love we bore to sport and its adjuncts. I do not believe time has gilded the scene with the distance of enchantment, for I can plainly remember my enjoyment of it—an enjoyment so little affected by a dutiful desire to be far away, and in my proper place, that I know it was great. Mr. Davidson talked of runs and horses, and confided to me his desire to hunt hounds himself one day. We did not analyse feelings in those days, but I am quite sure the disciple of the modern metaphysical school, looking in upon us, would have pronounced that we 'fancied' each other, we were so very unconscious of it. I was disagreeably surprised at the end of dessert to find it was eight o'clock.

'I have had a fire lighted in the drawing-room,' said my host, 'in case you should prefer to sit alone until the dog-cart comes; but I can't help hoping you will indulge in bachelor vices, and occupy this chair instead.' He had risen, but, instead of going to the door, laid his hand on the back of a lounging-chair by the fireside.

I took it, but expressed a hope the carriage would not be long coming. Mr. Davidson rang the bell.

'Miss Mowbray wishes to be

starting, Barnes. Let me know as soon as Carter returns.'

'Carter has returned, sir. Hodge's mare is lame, and can't go out.'

Mr. Davidson looked across at me. I was silent, perplexed, and annoyed. The escapade had been very pleasant up to this point, but threatened to be spoilt by consequences.

'You must think of something else, Barnes,' said his master, reading the expression of my face.

Barnes consulted the carpet. A fool mostly consults the ceiling. Barnes was no fool; but he was willing to gain time. 'The last stopping train has gone,' he said, meditating, 'or Jim might perhaps have driven the hack to the Bent Station.' Barnes paused.

'Leave us for half an hour, and then bring coffee. I shall have thought of something by that time, or you will. Stop, Barnes! Isn't there a parsonage at Hell-gatton? Is there no horse there?'

'The vicar's away, sir. I inquired, and I don't know what they keep.'

Barnes left the room, after waiting to see if there were a reply. A silence followed, which Mr. Davidson broke.

'At nine o'clock, Miss Mowbray,' he said, 'we will think of desperate measures; till then, don't let us spoil our evening.'

He had changed nothing but his boots and neckcloth, that our dress might agree, and now sat opposite me in serviceable pink, looking, by the light of the shaded lamp, a very attractive man. And yet he was no beauty. If the word 'shambling' had been applied to his figure, it would hardly have been abusive; only the perfection of his clothes assisted Nature more than she deserved. My education too had made me

critical; and yet I should have found it difficult to define a blot so as to get beyond the general effect of sweet temper and geniality. We drank our coffee, and when nine o'clock struck, Barnes opened the door.

'Jim thinks, sir,' he said, 'the hack might drive as far as Bittenborough, if you really wished it; though he is a little afraid of the old strain, in case the horse got tired. He says there is a posting-inn there, where you might get horses, or—'

He was interrupted by a ring at the door-bell. Mr. Davidson rose and stood with his back to the fire.

'I suppose,' he said slowly, and looking down at me from the height of his six feet, 'you would prefer, at any risk, getting home to-night; but this seems a lame scheme.'

'Mr. Davidson back? Capital!' It was the Master's voice at the hall-door.

My host sprang across the room, and there was hasty question and answer.

'Couldn't rest,' said the Master, as the voices came nearer, 'till I had seen you again and talked the run over. Got home, got some dinner, and drove on to you. Hounds sleep at my house. Your horse is as fit as may be; but you had best let him stand in my stable a couple of days. Thirty-two miles, Davidson, and hounds dead beat! Lay down by the side of their fox, the bob-tail we viewed away from Holmstrey, and never even rolled him over.'

Mr. Davidson stopped him as he opened the door.

'Miss Mowbray lost herself on the moor, and came here for some gruel.'

'Nelly, my dear little girl! Here's a surprise, if you like! Why, when did you leave us?

I was in a fright about you, and sounded my horn to give you our direction. Why, you might have been lost for good !

He was holding my hand by this time.

'Mr. Chitty—dear Mr. Chitty ! the darkness came on, and I was quite lost ; but Mr. Davidson has been so kind. But my horse is done—and—and I am more glad to see you than I can say.'

'You've a good horse in that bay,' said the Master, 'and you rode him well ; but nothing could stay the distance. Will's killed his horse ;' and then he went off to the doings of horses and hounds, addressing some of his talk to me, some to Mr. Davidson, with a garrulity so new that it was proof of the greatness of his excitement. 'There was not another man in England,' he kept interpolating, 'who'd have done what you did, Davidson. I shall be, and the hunt will be, in your debt all our lives, unless you'll sell me the roan for 500 guineas, and let me think I have at least shown you my opinion about it.'

But my host disdained all credit, though he led the Master on till some of his enthusiasm had expended itself.

It was not till then I could remind him of the hour, when, after a visit to Paladin, carefully bandaged as he stood sleepily knee-deep in straw in a loose-box, we got into the dog-cart and drove to his house at a rapid pace. Mrs. Chitty was just retiring, but came down with a kind welcome, while I did not think it necessary to correct the Master's confused account of my losing myself on the moors, and arriving at Hellgatton in the very nick of time for his rescue. The whole escapade seemed so natural to the lively Irish-woman that explanation was superfluous ; so I went to bed with

the promise of a hack early the following morning, that I might reach home in time to meet my father on his return. He, as it chanced, was dining and sleeping out that night, the knowledge of which fact had very much diminished my annoyance at not being able to reach home sooner.

Well, Jack, that is nearly the end, though not quite the end, of the happy past. I met Mr. Davidson twice more, and I could tell you every detail of each meeting at this distance of time. Then it all broke up. His father failed suddenly, as it seemed, but it was only that he had concealed it from our friend until the crash actually came. His son had nothing but what was allowed him by the elder Mr. Davidson, and all his possessions were swept in to the creditors' claims. I saw the father's death announced a few weeks later, and, much as Mr. Davidson's affairs were discussed in sporting circles, his old set lost sight of him as completely as if he had never lived amongst them. That was the only man, Jack, I ever loved ; but my life went on externally the same as ever, and people who had nothing better to do—there are so many of them—wondered why my father's heiress, who must have had what ladies call 'so many chances,' never married. You know historians and biographers moralise over might-have-beens. There are others 'mute and inglorious' besides possible Miltons. With Mr Davidson's ruin died a potential Meynell or Smith, but the waters closed over his head as they closed over others. The circles grow fainter as they widen, but the wash has floated or submerged some plant or other which is affected in a manner we do not realise.

Ten years ago, Jack, on the 11th of August, I got into the Northern night-express at Grant-ham. A *coupé* had been reserved for me by telegraph; but my maid was taken suddenly ill, and had to be left at a friend's house, whilst I travelled on to Ross-shire alone. The train came up late, and the few changes had been made in haste, when the guard came up to my carriage with an apologetic expression on his face, and began to explain that there was not another seat in the train but the one in my compartment, and that a gentleman was most desirous of going on to York at once. He did not like to ask it, but delays were dangerous; the passenger was quite a gentleman, had offered his card. He paused suggestively. I could not well refuse the civility that lay in my power, as I took the card without reading it, and told the man my maid's seat was at the traveller's service. The light of the lamp half-showed, as railway lamps do, a tall figure, which sprang into the carriage with an apology, and the train was again in motion. I was *tête-à-tête* for the second time in my life with Mr. Davidson. I read the card as I handed it back to him with some words in reply to his thanks, and as I did so our eyes met. I might have failed to recognise him; he knew me in a moment, and a rush of recollection on both sides made us speechless. He took my hand and held it. 'I was coming to you, Nelly,' he said, 'coming into Yorkshire to find you. I am rich now; Providence has prospered me beyond my best hopes. He has blessed the work of which you were the end and aim. Thank God!' His excitement checked him. So he had thought of me as Nelly all these years, me whom he had only

met three times! I told him quietly enough, for his agitation calmed my surprise, my immediate destination and my winter plans, till he grew composed again, and told me with his old quiet smile what his life had been for ten long years. Such busy years! Imagine, Jack, what the talent and what the energy must have been that could honestly make a large fortune in the time that had slipped by me like a dream, even in the then unexhausted field of Australian enterprise, and with the help at starting that his father's old connection gave! He was the same as ever. The cheery voice had its old pleasant ring, the kind blue eyes flashed with the same light as when he recounted the roan's hunting feats that long ago night in Copshire. Do you think a woman of thirty-three very old? I had had an easy life, a regular round of wholesome sport and domestic occupation, and some women change very little between twenty-five and thirty-five. My hair was not white then, Jack, as it was twenty-four hours later. The run to York was too exciting for happiness, though it was the culminating hour of my life. I neither guessed where we were, nor cared, well as I knew the old familiar line. His eyes never left my face; for us the whole world was for a time enclosed within the cushioned walls of a railway compartment. I forget how soon we had planned to meet again. All is confused in my mind, but he was to go on to my father's house, and write to me from there; he was to come to us for cubbing in September. I remember the last words he was saying, though; they ring in my ears still. 'Such a short time to wait, Nelly, if we could think—'

There was a crash, a rebound,
a terrible moment, while Time
himself seemed to stand still, and
all was over. . . .

They picked him up dead from
the ruins of that terrible accident,

and I, Jack—I had not even a
scratch.

Have I tired you, old man! I
think I will go down now and see
if the brown mare has had her
mash.

A DREAM OF SUMMER.

BY J. G. WHITTIER.

BLAND as the morning breath of June
The south-west breezes play,
And through its haze the winter noon
Seems warm as summer's day.
The snow-plumed Angel of the North
Has dropp'd his icy spear;
Again the mossy earth looks forth,
Again the streams gush clear.

The fox his hillaide cell forsakes,
The musk-rat leaves his nook,
The blue-bird in the meadow brakes
Is singing with the brook.
'Bear up, O Mother Nature!' cry
Bird, breeze, and streamlet free;
'Our winter voices prophecy
Of summer days to thee!'

So in these winters of the soul,
By bitter blasts and drear,
O'erswept from Memory's frozen pole,
Will sunny days appear.
Reviving hope and faith, they show
The soul its living powers,
And how beneath the winter's snow
Lie germs of summer flowers!

The night is mother of the day,
The winter of the spring,
And ever upon old decay
The greenest mosses cling.
Behind the cloud the starlight lurks,
Through showers the sunbeams fall;
For God, who loveth all His works,
Has left His hope with all.





(Designed by W. J. Palmer)

ON THE KING OF ISLAND RIVERS.

Drawn by H. R. Buntin.

LIFE ON THE UPPER THAMES.

THE varieties of life on the Upper Thames are an endless subject. Some years ago Mr. H. R. Robertson drew some charming sketches from various points, one of which we now present to readers who may be fond of eels and sunsets. The Thames eel is the eel *par excellence*. This may be on account of cleaner feeding. They are seldom offered for sale, and in weight they do not generally exceed three pounds. Occasionally one may be found as heavy as seven pounds.

Grig-weels* are wicker baskets sunk in the river for the purpose of catching eels. They contain a chamber, into which there is an entrance narrowing inwards nearly to a point, and formed at the end of converging willow rods. These rods diverge easily upon pressure, and so admit the long thin body of the eel into the chamber, when they close again and prevent his return. The old-fashioned wire mouse-trap is precisely similar as regards the principle of construction, so that allusion to it will render further description unnecessary. These traps are intended only to be used for the catching of eels, but other fish may be taken in them. Stones attached near each end of the weel are used for the purpose of sinking them.

Grig-weels are commonly laid with the openings down the stream, as it is in their progress

* 'Grig or ground-weels' are the terms used in the bye-laws of the Thames Conservancy Acts. Any small eel is called a grig on the Thames; a Saxon origin is ascribed to the word 'weel or weely' by Dr. Johnson, who defines it as 'a twiggen snare or trap for fish (perhaps from willow).'
—CAREW.

up the river that the smaller eels are generally taken. About eighteen of these baskets comprise the set that the fisherman employs at one time. He usually lays them about sunset, and collects them again early in the morning. He tries all the likely-looking spots, varying the locality very much on different nights, according to his fancy. It is a rather severe tax upon the memory to recollect every place at which he has lowered a weel; and sometimes he will break a small willow bough opposite the spot, or tie a knot in a rush, or use some other simple means to the same end. The weels are raised from the bed of the river by means of a hitcher or boat-hook, which is groped about till it catches between the twigs of which the basket is composed. There is a wooden stopper at the upper or small end of the weel, which is taken out that the fish may be shaken into the well of the punt.

For bait a few gudgeon are used, or the refuse of larger fish, enclosed in the inner chamber; but when the fish are 'moving,' they are frequently taken without the trap being baited at all.

This 'moving' of fish is altogether a very uncertain affair, and seems to be beyond man's calculation. Little is known except the facts that when there is much electricity in the air, eels are exceedingly active; and that, as with other fish, very light nights are not favourable to their capture. That most of the weels will contain fish or that none will, and that on the same night all the fishermen will be successful or

none, is the case ; but the reasons for this are purely conjectural.

The time of the day suggested in our illustration is about half an hour after sunset, as the fisherman nears the end of his task. Others, besides ourselves, Mr. Robertson remarks, will doubtless have noticed the absolute stillness that so often reigns at that hour, however boisterous the day may have been. Every object is perfectly reflected from the surface of the water ; and, owing to the position in which one object often is as regards others, it not unfrequently happens that the inverted shadow is seen more distinctly than the substance to which it owes its existence. We have often watched this effect ; and after a blustering day in

September it is peculiarly fascinating, as the light fades and the gusts of wind die away, to note the gradual change into such a quiet as seems almost unreal. In *My Study Windows* Professor Lowell speaks of 'that delicious sense of disenthralment from the actual which the deepening twilight brings with it, giving, as it does, a sort of obscure novelty to things familiar.'

In recent numbers of *London Society* we have given specimens of Theodore Hook's rare powers in the art of improvisation. Here is another—a Thames ditty, composed in a punt in the year 1834, when Hook was at his best. The verses appeared in the old *New Monthly Magazine*, and are little known.

' When sultry suns and dusty streets
Proclaim town's *winter* season,
And rural scenes and cool retreats
Sound something like high treason,
I steal away to shades serene,
Which yet no bard has hit on,
And change the bustling heartless scene
For quietude and DITTON.

Here lawyers free from legal toils,
And peers released from duty,
Enjoy at once kind Nature's smiles,
And eke the smiles of beauty :
Beauty with talent brightly graced,
Whose name must not be written ;
The idol of the fane is placed
Within the shades of DITTON.

Let lofty mansions great men keep—
I have no wish to rob 'em—
Not courtly Claremont, Escher's steep,
Nor Squire Combe's at Cobham.
Sir Hobhouse has a mansion rare,
A large red house at Whitton ;
But Cam with Thames I can't compare,
Nor Whitton class with DITTON.

I'd rather live like General Moore,
In one of the pavilions
Which stand upon the other shore,
Than be the king of millions ;
For though no subjects might arise
To exercise my wit on,
From morn till night I'd feast my eyes
By gazing at sweet DITTON.

The mighty queen whom Cydnus bore
In gold and purple floated ;
But happier I, when near this shore,
Although more humbly boated ;
Give me a punt, a rod, a line,
A snug armchair to sit on,
Some well-iced punch, and weather fine,
And let me fish at DITTON.

The Swan—snug inn—good fare affords
As table e'er was put on,
And worthier quite of loftier boards
Its poultry, fish, and mutton.
And while sound wine mine host supplies,
With beer of Meux and Tritton,
Mine hostess, with her bright blue eyes,
Invites to stay at DITTON.

Here, in a placid waking dream,
I'm free from worldly troubles,
Calm as the rippling silver stream
That in the sunshine bubbles ;
And when sweet Eden's blissful bowers
Some abler bard has writ on,
Despairing to transcend *his* powers,
I'd *ditto* say to DITTON.

HOLIDAY HOBBIES.

LORD BROUGHAM, with all profound thinkers, declares that 'Blessed is the man who has a hobby.' Very safe, indeed, would it be to say that most unblest is the man who has *no* hobby. Using 'apt alliteration's artful aid' to impress on the memory this incontrovertible truth, it may be said that holidays, hobbies, and happiness go hand in hand. Some fortunate beings there are in the world whose occupations or business, by which they earn their daily bread, are of such a nature as to be legitimate hobbies in themselves. Especially blessed, therefore, are those whose avocations are of this description, or whose minds are so constituted that they can invest their trade with the fascinations which belong to the hobby proper. But it can hardly be said that an entirely mechanical means of earning a livelihood can offer any great attraction beyond that honest one of feeling that we are doing our duty in that station of life, &c., which accompanies its pursuit. That, however, is not a hobby proper. The copying-clerk in a lawyer's office or the dispenser of necessities in a dry-goods store can scarcely be expected to find anything in the shape of a hobby in such prosaic occupations. No, if the walk in life is eminently unattractive in itself, the more indispensable does it become for a man to cultivate an unmistakable thoroughbred hobby. Even those lucky ones above referred to, whose professions or callings are, from their very nature, hobby-like in character,

cannot get through life quite pleasantly without having a hack hobby—that is, one that can be mounted when the day's work is done and the hour for necessary relaxation has come. For it must be maintained and insisted on that there is no relaxation or rest, no real holiday, in absolutely doing nothing. 'An empty mind is the devil's house,' says an old adage; and so we may at least get the better of the gentleman in black in this regard by taking care to obtain an eligible tenant for our 'upper story.' The character and profession, so to speak, of this same tenant must, of course, depend greatly upon the taste and inclination of the landlord; and, being a free agent, living in a free country, he has the advantage, in most instances, of picking and choosing from the large breed of hobbies—any one of which is ready, upon very slight encouragement, to take up his residence with him and carry him for many a long hour's ride. Thus, for instance, the artist, than whom no man earns his daily bread by a more fascinating avocation, will, if he be wise, adopt for his hobby one which affords the greatest contrast to this calling. He will take up something purely mechanical, something which will occupy his hands or thoughts without making any great demand upon his higher mental faculties; and the same rule will apply to the musician, the writer, the scientist, or to any one whose pursuit is in itself at once engrossing, elevating, and eminently pleasant, but at the

same time more or less sedentary. There is no need to indicate precisely what, under these or any other circumstances, is the right hobby; any one is right which brings into play a fresh set of muscles of body and mind from those which, as it were, are in daily use. By the same token, he whose business is bustling or prosaic requires a restful, tranquil, easy-going hobby; and for this reason it is, probably, that we find so many men who, as amateurs, become enthusiastic painters, musicians, botanists, geologists, or the like. For the majority of mankind get their living in the whirl and turmoil of the world, or in the hard grinding, monotonous, horse-at-the-mill sort of round of daily life, and need the soothing influence of art, literature, science, or nature in their hours of relaxation. Man, again, is a collecting animal, delighting ever in accumulating the results of his labours, professional and otherwise; and thus it is good that the hobby should in some wise offer an opportunity for the exercise of this propensity. It will be doubly valuable as completing or satisfying this craving of the human instinct, so that a hobby, to answer all its purposes, should contribute to the store, subjective or objective, as the case may be.

Of course it is at holiday-times especially that we can mount our hobby with the freest sense of enjoyment, and it is at holiday-times therefore more than at any other that man feels the necessity of having this valuable hack handy. Without it he cannot be thoroughly happy; the time which he has on his hands hangs heavily, and ends usually in his spending it in purposeless, vacuous, and unrefreshing idleness, leading him soon to tire of his release from

business, and setting him longing again to get back to the monotony of mere bread-winning for the very sake of having 'something to do.' He returns to his office, to the mart, or the counter, but little the better for the month's or six weeks' leave he has had, and bringing home with him nothing to show for it probably but an empty purse, and an equally empty mind. Say he has been travelling, and, as he pleases to think, seeing the world; but unless by so doing he has been laying up something upon which his mind can rest with satisfaction afterwards, and to which he can turn as a profitable and pleasurable experience, he will not really get half the pleasure out of his trip that he might, that infinite pleasure of retrospect. Unless it has been his hobby to study men and manners, institutions, systems, habits, languages, what not, merely passing from one place to another can have afforded him little benefit beyond that very transient one called change of scene—a change generally as soon forgotten as are the names of the towns or districts through which he has journeyed. The facilities which modern civilisation have put at our command for covering long distances in a short time have created a strong inclination for what our American cousins call 'tall walking.' 'Going about,' as the phrase runs, has become almost a hobby in itself amongst many people in holiday-time, and properly used, there is no denying it is both healthful and profitable; but to be so, mere locomotion should only be looked upon as a means to an end—that is, as a means to the exercising of some more definite hobby. Without making a serious business of it in any way, travelling, whether at home or abroad, should be done with one's eyes open in all senses

of the expression, and advantage should be taken of our new surroundings to collect and accumulate something. Even the commonest notebook or journal with a prosaic record of names and dates is better than nothing; and if a man has no higher notion of a hobby let him at least make a collection of these notebooks from year to year, rather than allow his excursioning to vanish from his memory and his life 'like the baseless fabric of a vision.' Bearing in mind, then, that after all to most of us holiday-making means 'going away'—that is, in its broadest sense, going away from our daily business—we must look upon travelling as an indispensable part of a holiday, and endeavour to discover the hobby best suited to go with it. This undoubtedly is sketching, for if in addition to the journalistic record of our holiday trips we can add some graphic illustrations, we at once have the most complete and satisfying means of turning our going about to good account. No matter how poor, artistically considered, our efforts in the graphic art may be, the merest daub, the merest line, will serve us better sometimes than pages of description if we desire to recall a particular day's doings, or the aspect of a particular spot, object, or personage. Nay, a series of the roughest sketches, with names and dates affixed, form in themselves, at least for ourselves, a most readable journal; for we never cast our eye over such a collection without remembering a thousand circumstances associated with this or that especial sketch, and which we would not willingly have forgotten, but which have faded from our memory by mere lapse of time. Then, again, grant but a fair command over brush or pencil—a command, by the way, which can be

acquired with a little perseverance by most people (for most people who can learn to write can learn to draw, after a fashion, if they choose)—and we have an opportunity of gratifying that instinct for the hoarding above referred to. A collection of fairly-executed sketches done on our various journeys, moreover, will often afford useful hints to friends bent on similar routes, and at least in their way are as well worth preserving, from the amateur's point of view, as botanical, geological, ornithological, or any other 'ological' specimens.

Yet another, and even, perhaps, a greater advantage is to be found in making sketching a holiday hobby; for live we but long enough, there must come to most of us a time, sooner or later, according to the vitality which is in us, when retrospect will have more charm than prospect, and when looking back through the vista of holidays past will afford us more joy than making arrangements for those which are to come. The precise moment at which this unfortunate period is reached may be indicated in various ways, again depending upon our temperament and natural proclivities. With some, an inkling of its approach may be opined when dancing is given up, as an exertion incompatible with a rotund figure and a flushing face; or by the same token when there is a marked preference for the outside of a donkey or mule, when the intricacies and steep stony ways of the Gemmi or the precipitous approaches to Zermatt have to be contended with. Others will date their disinclination to budge far a-field from that visit to the physician, and his recommendation to substitute weak whisky-and-water for the foaming tankard of Ind & Coope, or from that automatic

aversion which gradually asserts itself to running up-stairs, or stooping to readjust the recalcitrant boot-lace. Many may see indications of the sere and yellow leaf in the growing propensity to drop into the armchair after dinner with the evening paper, instead of craving for the excitement of the playhouse or the concert-room. Innumerable, indeed, are the signs of those times which, in due course, will relegate us to the contemplation of holiday-travel as a business not lightly to be entered on; and if we are wise we shall not neglect, but accept them as beneficent foreshadowings which, properly understood, will save us a vast amount of vexation and trouble. To bow to the inevitable is the surest way of robbing it of its most poignant sting. By making the best of it, and keeping a sharp look-out for the compensations sure to accompany most earthly evils, have we but the wit to find them, we may still obtain a considerable degree of pleasant holiday-making, even should we be incapable of stirring from our own fireside, or unable to shake off the trammels which, in one shape or another, may hold us within our accustomed tether.

Under these circumstances, overhauling our various batches of sketches affords means of once again vividly living through 'the days that are no more,' and of securing a certain form of holiday happiness out of our hobby. Albeit such happiness is tinged with a tender melancholy, it is preferable to the sense of overwhelming regret likely to be induced by the hopeless contrasting of the past with the present. If the time be gone, we have at least something to show for it, and we shall find our mind irresistibly wandering away through the pleasant woodlands, across the

mountains, or along 'the beachy girdle of the ocean'—wherever, indeed, it is taken by the counterfeited presentments of the spots where past holidays were spent. Irresistibly we shall revive some of those delights which we experienced at the time, and if they are but secondhand they are better than none; better than vainly sitting twiddling our thumbs and wishing for the impossible. We shall discover no little recompense for the torpidity of the body, in an increased mental activity; and if this be properly encouraged and managed, it will go far to make up for, if it does not actually supersede, the enjoyment once derived from energetic movement. The loss of the power of making bodily exertion can be counteracted in its evil and depressing effects by giving the brain a larger share of hard work; and in the library at our books, in the studio at our easel, or in the sanctum at our desk, we can find scope and verge enough for the exercise of other functions than those of wind and limb—functions, be it remembered, which, as years go on, demand their due share of consideration, and which, if not set in motion at their proper time, leave us but very incomplete and scarcely worthy specimens of the human race.

The being who makes no call upon his higher faculties at some time of life fails to fulfil not only his destiny, but the task which Nature allots to us all if we would be happy; and it is just when we discover that lawn-tennis, cricket, dancing, travelling, mountaineering, or whatever our especial athletic hobbies may have been, begin to fatigue and bore us, that we should look to the development of our mental capacities for the enjoyment and relaxation we were wont to obtain from our

holiday activities. Middle age and so onward for the time following to the end can be rendered very bearable, in a greater or less degree, by adopting a modification of the advice given by a certain politician when he recommended that we should live well, smoke in moderation, and work for fifteen hours a day. To the young athletic holiday-maker, however, such a dictum must appear preposterous.

'In the very May morn of his youth, ripe for exploits and mighty enterprises,' he cannot, of course, imagine or believe that the exercise of the brain can, in any sort, supplant the exercise of the limb as a means of obtaining enjoyment, recreation, or healthful rest. For rest and work—that is brain-work—appear to him incompatible, paradoxical; and it will take some years for him to arrive at the conviction that there is no real holiday so enjoyable or restful as change of work. The change is the rest; for to be idle is to weary oneself, mere shapeless idleness to the healthy mind being about the most fatiguing of all ways of burning through time. The very secret of making life worth living lies in creating or keeping up an interest in it; it is unendurable otherwise—'stale, flat, and unprofitable'—and there can be no interest extractable from mere blank vacuity. Hence a holiday, as forming a very material part of life, should be no more devoid of interest or profit than are the hours of work, otherwise a holiday becomes a bore, as we often hear that it is, the consequence being that it fails to afford the rest for which it is intended. We should rest in order that we may work—not work in order that we may rest; if we do, we fly in the very face of Nature—at

least until the night cometh when no man can work.

'I would give nothing for a young man who did not begin life with an enthusiasm of some kind; it shows at least that he had faith in something good, lofty, and generous from his own standpoint.' So wrote Buffon; and it may safely be asserted that a young man so beginning life will seldom fail to feed the fire of his enthusiasm with congenial fuel to the end of his days: hence he will be as enthusiastic in his holiday-making in due season as in all else. He will take up a hobby apart from his profession, and hail the holiday as the occasion to exercise it; and, as the time shall go on, he will adapt the pace, so to speak, at which he rides it to the nature of the ground across which his life-journey lies. Over the pleasant, smooth, and level plain where he makes his start he will give full rein to his faithful hack, covering as much ground and getting as much enjoyment and profit out of every sunny spot as the speed at which he goes will allow. Wisely guided and skilfully ridden, his hobby should carry him on for many a day without showing signs of fatigue, until, when he begins to ascend the rougher road, he can turn in his saddle and look back with satisfaction on the route by which he has attained a more or less commanding eminence. Then, perhaps, allowing the reins to lie loosely on his steed's neck, he can saunter on and on with more deliberation, and, with apter knowledge, cull happiness from a lower rate of speed, so that when finally the summit of his ambition has been reached he will commence the downhill journey with the assurance that he has not lived or ridden in vain. It will be then that he may make up for a falling

off of bodily energy by bringing into play that which is mental, and the store and hoard he has accumulated will be found to yield material upon which he can work still with profit and pleasure. His hobby—whatever it is—will be still as dear to him as ever; he will only ride it after a different fashion, or, if the fancy so takes him, he may exchange it for another more suitable to his years,

but not less useful as a means of carrying him on to the journey's end.

'The labour we delight in physics pain;' and so long as he can labour at something in which he delights he will ward off all sense of weariness, forget that he is growing old, and still, by means of his hobby, extract as much happiness as ever out of his holiday. W. W. FENN.

WHY THE ROSES FIRST GREW THORNS.

A Fable.

Love in Pleasure's garden straying,
Where the frolic Graces playing
Wandered on from flower to flower,
Plucked the blooms around him blowing,
Laughed and prattled, all unknowing
Time would bring a darker hour.

Down a myrtle-sheltered alley
Came he, where Elysium's valley
Opened sudden to his gaze—
In the sunlight soft and mellow
Roses white and red and yellow
Stretched before him in a maze!

Ne'er was seen so rare a splendour,
Ne'er did earthly pleasure render
Such a rapture and a joy;
All the air with fragrance filling,
Heart and soul with gladness thrilling
In the Queen of Beauty's boy!

Swift he speeds towards such treasure,
Heedless that the gods to Pleasure
Gave alone the entry there:
Vainly call the gentle Graces,
Chiding with reproachful faces,
'Foolish Cupid, stay! forbear!'

In that valley long he lingers,
And with sacrilegious fingers
Bud and full-blown blossom plucks,
And—O little imp of malice!—
Honey from each petalled chalice
Like the brown bee-rover sucks!

Why the Roses first grew Thorns.

Like the bee ! Alas for stupid
 Mischief-loving Master Cupid !

Punishment soon follows sin :
 While he pulls at one rich cluster,
 Thence another robber thrust her
 Poignant barb his thumb within !

Buzzing out against him blindly,
 And with purpose most unkindly,
 Menacing, she circles round ;
 He, of further damage fearful,
 Sobbing pettishly and tearful,
 Flies before her, giving ground !

Done to death as he supposes,
 ' Out on these deceitful roses !'
 Shrieks the little wretch in pain,
 Gazing ruthful at the swelling,
 And the tiny puncture telling
 Where, sharp stinging, lurks his bane.

' Ruin seize thee ! Ne'er in Nature
 Viler flowers or viler creature
 Fashioned by the gods than these !
 Pluto, hurry to perdition,
 Without pity or contrition,
 Both the roses and the bees !

Or, if this cannot be granted,
 Nevermore may there be wanted,
 In requital for their scorn,
 By the bee, a thief, for money
 Robbing her of life and honey,
 By the rose a plaguy thorn !'

So he prayed, in anguish sighing,
 From that hurtful insect flying
 To the Graces for their aid ;
 Jove, in far Olympus reigning,
 Heard and pitied Love's complaining,
 Granting all for which he prayed.

Since that day each rosy treasure
 In the garden-bowers of Pleasure,
 Though, as compensating meed,
 Charm more luring round it lingers
 Since the touch of Love's light fingers,
 Wears full many a thorn indeed.

And 'tis doomed that whoso stealeth
 Those forbidden blossoms feeleth
 Straightway all that Cupid bore :
 Keener wounds and woes inflicted
 Than by words may be depicted
 In the heart for evermore !

A KENTISH PILGRIMAGE.

THE original idea occurred to us towards the end of April last that we would follow one of the old pilgrim roads which lead through Kent to Canterbury, and we selected that taken by the devotees who came from the western parts of England, in preference to the route of Chaucer's immortal company, on account of its picturesque character, and because we believed it to be almost a *terra incognita*.

The Old Way—for it is scarcely to be dignified by the title of road—enters Kent about a mile to the north-west of Westerham, just under the yet rural village of Tatsfield. Its course may be more or less distinctly traced throughout by the dotted line of black yew-trees which grow about a mile above it; and knowing as we do to what great age these trees attain, there is no reason to doubt that those beneath which we shall pass have looked upon many a genuine pilgrim cavalcade in the olden time.

To obviate the necessity of converting a pleasure into a toil, we have chosen to make Boxley our first sleeping-place—that is to say, we have divided our pilgrimage into two almost equal parts of about twenty-five miles each.

So we step out in the brisk morning air, seeming to feel that, under the influence of sunshine after heavy rain, Nature is doing her best to make up for lost time. Thrushes and blackbirds are singing their merriest; the cuckoo's note is frequent, and we hear it for the first time upon our right hand—in these parts it being deemed an evil

omen to hear it for the first time on the left. The trees are getting heavy with their brilliant new livery, although here and there a naked old oak seems to frown doubtfully, as much as to say, 'Don't you believe it: there are lots of frosts and cold winds yet to come.' Cowslips and primroses literally tapestry the banks on either side of the path, and we can see through the waving green and young stems of the woodland pansies, ragged robins, wood anemones, cranesbills, blue-bells, and the numberless other beauteous ladies of the court of Queen May, who will arrive shortly.

We pass Westerham and Braated in the valley about a mile beneath us, and make straight for Chevening Park. Formerly the Old Way ran across the park; but some years back Earl Stanhope, in the face of much public opposition, procured an Act of Parliament for the closing of it, so that we are obliged to strike straight up a rough hill to the left, and then to take a pleasant path through the heart of dense woods until we reach the main road between London and Tonbridge. This we cross, and, regaining the Old Way, dip down into Otford.

At Otford stood one of those splendid castle-palaces used by sovereigns and prelates on their leisurely and luxurious 'progresses' to and from the cathedral city.

Very little of it remains, and that little has been put to terribly base uses. A fine old ivy-grown tower, and a line of buildings

which, under their modern guise of labourers' cottages, still bear the stamp of cloisters, comprise the sole existing relics of once famous Otford Castle; but as we explore a little further, we can see scattered over many acres of land the outlines of party-walls, diversified here and there by a crumbling bit of old buttress, which tells of the former extent of the buildings. Beneath the soft turf upon which we stand, beneath the filth and confusion of the cow-yards, are said to be ranges of cellars and lengths of passages (one of which is supposed to connect with the Mote House at Ightham), associated in the rustic mind with all sorts of weird legends and stories.

On our way upwards we pass St. Thomas's Well—a deep oblong structure of solid masonry almost hidden in bramble and bush, but the waters of which are still believed to possess medicinal qualities of more than ordinary efficacy.

We follow the Way, or, as it is called in these parts even after a lapse of nearly four hundred years, the 'Old Pilgrim,' for three miles, and then strike down into the little village of Kemsing, to visit a genuine old relic of the pilgrim days in the shape of St. Edith's Well, a curious old monument shaped like a dumb-bell minus one of its knobs. Here the pilgrims halted to replenish their gourds, and the water is still said to be the clearest and freshest in West Kent. We regain the Way after this digression, and find ourselves in a world of complete solitude; for although here the road is good and broad, until it cuts the main road from Gravesend to Wrotham and Tonbridge it seems to be but little used, probably because, following the plan of all pilgrim roads, it runs aloof from towns and villages, and

may be said to lead nowhere but to Canterbury.

Still, although the sounds of human hurry and turmoil are absent, there is no lack of life. In almost every field may be seen sturdy teams dragging plough and harrow; in the distance, to our right, we get a view of a fine old manor-house known as St. Clare—probably built upon the site of one of the innumerable chapels or shrines which formerly dotted the Old Way; a solitary boy, standing in the midst of a large newly-sown field ostensibly for the purpose of scaring away crows, stares and gapes at us as unusual phenomena; and the dogs, which are invariably attached to the very few cottages hereabouts, bark and tug at their tethers as if resenting our intrusion in a path so long diverted from its original purposes.

So we continue, always under the line of sentinel yews, always about half a mile above the villages; on our right a splendid panorama of fertile valley shut in by densely wooded hills—hills amidst which nestle many of those 'ancient halls' to which, as Macaulay relates in stirring verse, the warlike errand sped in the days of the Invincible Armada.

The hard white road, however, soon dwindles into a mere grass-grown bridle-path; and we are delighted with it, for it is exactly as we had pictured the Old Way beforehand, and should have been disappointed had it turned out to be an ordinary dusty country road.

About midday we see in the distance the pall of smoke which marks the paper-mills and pottery-works on the banks of the Medway, which we are to cross, as the pilgrims did, at Snodland, when they did not take the road by Lower Halling. So we turn down to the right from an utterly lonesome and

silent bit of country to Paddleworth, a solitary farmhouse, which, from its strength and size, must have been a veritable moated grange of the romantic type.

When we get to Snodland we are charmed to see that the first inn bears the sign of the Monk's Head, and congratulate ourselves that we are going to consume our bread-and-cheese in a house which may in old times have been a pilgrims' caravanserai. Alas, our host informs us that he built the house about ten years since in an open field, and that he had chosen the sign of the Monk's Head as a joke upon his own name, which is Fryer.

We are not particularly struck with Snodland, for although it might have been a pleasant little place enough in the olden time, the development of the paper and pottery works has told its tale, and the old characteristics of the place are being gradually swept away to make room for grimy chimneys and mean rows of yellow cottages. Even the Church field and the Stone Grave field, wherefrom were disinterred not many years ago very interesting remains of Roman occupation, are being built upon, and the old church itself is in very low company.

We cross the yellow turbid Medway by a ferry: our boatman tells us that the old pilgrims crossed it by means of rocks, which were blown up some time back to facilitate the increasing barge traffic.

We pass on through the two Burhams—the one snug and picturesque around its fine old church, the other staring and yellow around its fine new one—and so upwards on to the Way, which is here a broad and well-defined, well-used road. We have heard something about a holy well of the Otford and Kemsing type in

this neighbourhood, but, as no one seems to know anything about it, we abandon its quest.

Gradually the Way begins to assume its old shape, and by the time we reach the Rochester main road is once more little better than a footpath. We must turn to the left up this main road for a few hundred yards in order to visit that strange old British monument known as Kit's Coty House, which must have struck the pilgrims so often with wonder and amazement.

The four huge stones which compose it stand alone in a field a little above the Lower Bell inn. Of course, in the rustic mind, they are associated with the Evil One; but the very corruption of the name and the opinion of leading antiquaries seem to decide that beneath them were buried the ashes of the British prince Catigern, who fell in the great battle with Horsa at Aylesford, about a mile off. In another field below is a collection of smaller stones, which are popularly known as the Uncounted; and, indeed, upon the hill-sides all around are vestiges either of a British cemetery, or of that terrible battle which, in the words of the late Mr. Green, 'struck the keynote of the whole English conquest of Britain.'

We retrace our steps along the main road, and follow the Old Way from where we left it. Here it is a mere path of the roughest description, evidently much patronised by tramps, if we are to judge by the many remains of wood fires and relics of cast-off wearing apparel littered about, but otherwise as quiet and secluded as could be desired.

Were it not for the friendly line of yews on the hill-crest above us, we should have some difficulty in following the Old Pilgrim; but at length it assumes a respectable

aspect, and, as we are beginning to think that rest and substantial refreshment would not be amiss, the picturesque tower of Boxley church looms into sight.

Our inn here—the Queen's Head—has been a hostelry since the pilgrim days, and our hostess is a true type of the fast-disappearing race of buxom old English landladies. Behind the inn stretches a pleasant range of gardens, much frequented in the summer months by picnic-parties and holiday-makers of the better sort, from Rochester and New Brompton. A prominent ornament in the garden is the figure-head of the old line-of battle ship Howe, and is religiously decked up with laurel and bay every glorious First of June.

In Boxley church, facing us, stood that famous piece of clerical humbug, the 'Rood of Grace'—an image of the Virgin, which, by ingenious mechanism, was made to move its head and eyes, and which attracted simple-minded believers from all parts of England. In 1538, however, it was carted off to London, its machinery exposed, and burnt solemnly at Paul's Cross, so that Boxley lost a grand source of revenue.

On a beautiful May morning—and it may be remembered that the 1st of May 1883 was a solitary bright day in a gloomy period—we tear ourselves unwillingly away from pleasant Boxley to pursue our pilgrimage. We are agreeably reminded that the old English affection for the manners and customs of bygone times is not utterly extinct by the appearance of several pairs of little girls carrying, balanced upon a broom-stick, something carefully covered up in a clean apron. We bestow largesse; the cloth is raised, and, amidst a bower of sweet wild flowers, is seen a doll more or less

gorgeously arrayed. We don't like to tell these blue-eyed Saxon-haired little damsels that they are unconsciously following in the footsteps of the old pagans by this simple rustic custom, and that their dolls are so many Floras, and they wouldn't understand us if we were to; so we leave them bobbing and curtsying, and resume our own process of treading in old footsteps.

We pass by Deptling, a pretty little Kentish village, and Thurnham, with its mysterious old ruin on the hill-top, along the most sequestered and tranquil of paths, until we reach Hollingbourne—a name redolent of the old monk days.

Here we meet with a couple of rude shocks. The first is the appearance of an already half-drunk group of navvies who have been ushering in May morning with a carouse—regular moleskin-trousered, highlow-booted, brawny-shouldered navvies. In explanation of our question, 'What on earth are these fellows doing here?' shock number two appears. Right away through the pleasant fields, about a mile below us, runs a hideous half-made bright yellow railway embankment. When we were last here, a year ago, the country folk were all cockahoop at the prospect of the new line from Maidstone to Ashford; but there were doubts about its being undertaken: and here it is, in all its deforming monstrosity.

During an errand such as ours utility gives way to sentiment, and we deem the operation of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company as a direct insult upon our dearly cherished ideas of solitude and true rustic retirement. However, the rustics are delighted at the idea of the new era of prosperity on the eve of being opened up to them; so we grumble to ourselves.

f. We pass above Harrietsham, skirting Stede Hill Park, the railway fiend casting up his fumes and filth under the very walls of the old church, wherein repose long-departed Stedes and Baldwins, the past owners of the mansion on the hill, and for the first time meet with real difficulty in following the Old Way; for although the name still exists, the yew-trees have disappeared, and, as if glad to escape from their sombre watch, the Way itself seems to have disappeared also. We pass above 'poor' Lenham, and there is not even a footpath in the place of the Way. However, we keep on, guided by the tower of Charing Church, straight ahead; across ploughed fields, up to our knees in bramble and brake, through hedges, down steep chalk banks; for we are at least conscientiously following the line of the Old Way, if we are not actually on it. But at length matters get so bad that we make a push across the fields to Charing, intending to regain the lost Way, if possible, after we have sampled the King's Head malt liquor.

Charing, at the junction of the Maidstone, Canterbury, Faversham, and Ashford roads, was in the old coach days a place of no little importance, and, long previous to the days of coaches, was still more famous for its fine old archiepiscopal palace. We are reminded of Otford and Croydon when we see Charing Palace, or what is left of it. Cows and pigs thrusting their noses through sculptured doorways; windows, yet rich with delicate tracery, stuffed up with straw and fodder; the old banqueting-hall turned into a barn, a malting-house cowl pushed out from the roof of the old chapel. All around in the fields, as at Otford, may be traced the extent of the old palace, at which, in 1520,

Henry VIII. was sumptuously lodged on his way to the Field of the Cloth of Gold; but, with the exception of one ivy grown corner, which has been converted into a farmhouse, all that remains of old Charing Palace is crumbling decay and unbroken solitude.

The church is interesting, and with reference to a fire which consumed part of it, including the belfry, at the end of the sixteenth century, runs the distich,

'Dirty Charing lies in a hole,
She had but one bell, and that she stole;'

the theft being said to have been committed from Lenham to replace the consumed bells.

The village and its environs abound with curious old half-timbered houses, mostly in an excellent state of preservation, and the general atmosphere of the place is one of old-fashioned calm and peace, mingled with resignation to a fate which has deprived the village of what was substantial fame and reputation.

In case any intending pilgrim should wish to split his journey up into three parts, he will find no better accommodation, both as regards board and lodging, anywhere in the country than at the King's Head in Charing, although the other old inn, the Swan, is probably just as good. This is by the way.

Now we must resume our pilgrimage. 'No use trying to follow the Old Pilgrim from here to Canterbury,' says our host; 'it goes right away down by Eastwell Park and Wye, and then is only ploughed land.'

So we are reluctantly compelled to do the fourteen miles which remain between us and our destination by the main road.

However, it is a very pleasant road, and not very much more animated than the Old Pilgrim

we have just left. From Charing Hill one of the finest views in Kent may be obtained; and as the hill is a stiff one, the opportunity of looking far away over the weald even to the sea should not be lost. Then we pass through a long succession of woods, bright with May flowers, and cheerful with the ring of the woodman's axe, to Challock, situated on a pleasant green which in former years used to be the annual scene of rather a rowdy pleasure fair.

From Challock we pass through an exquisite country to Chilham, and mount a hill to explore the tiny village of timbered houses grouped around the gates of the fine old castle, admission to which is readily given, although the remains of a still older castle, immediately above the pleasant cricket-field, are the chief objects of attraction.

From Chilham we follow the course of the Stour and the South-Eastern Railway, through Chart-ham into Canterbury. This road is so frequently explored by pedestrians and bicyclists that it needs no description; but to wind up the pilgrimage in proper style, we finally unstrap our knapsacks at the Fleur de Lis Hotel, which

is within a few feet of an actual old hostelry patronised by the pilgrims, and now known as East-bridge Hospital, and facing the old inn, the George and Dragon, which is said to have been in those days a sort of 'succursale' to the hospital. Old 'brethren' and 'sisters' now live at the hospital as in almshouses, and they still cling to the belief that in the crypt below are to be found bottles of old wine such as the monks loved, and whisper strange stories concerning a mysterious flight of steps which lead from the hospital to the water-side.

Here we bring our little pilgrimage to a close, not at all sorry to enjoy a good bath after our fifty miles' tramp, in preparation for a substantial meal; then will follow as pleasant a part of the holiday as any—the retrospect over a pipe. In bad weather much of the road we have traversed must be simply impassable; but we have been favoured with perfect tramping weather, and can look back to our performance with unalloyed pleasure—unless the vision of the railway embankment be deemed a cloud over the general serenity of our path along the 'Old Pilgrim.'

FRANK ABELL.





Drawn by A. C. CORBOULD.

TOURIST FRIENDS.

[Engraved by H. W. CUTTS.]

** I never spoke the word "Farewell!"*

But with an utterance faint and low:



HERE AND THERE.

My daily round I gaily take ;
And, let my path be dry or muddy,
I keep the mental eye awake
To find a fitting food for study.
From hour to hour, from place to place,
In square or street or lane or alley,
With lively air but sober pace
I lounge about and shilly-shally.

The extra good, the ultra bad,
The rich and poor, the wise and silly ;
Their portraitures may all be had
From Aldgate Pump to Piccadilly.
His use to each the Fates assign,
Some special task to each decreeing ;
With joy I feel the lot is mine
To photograph my fellow-being.

I watch the gay and giddy throng
That fills the West through all the season ;
It aids me when I build my song
In tripping rhyme with little reason.
My Lady A., my Lady B.—
The stars of music and the drama—
The whole procession I can see
In one eternal panorama.

At sundry times I wander East,
And weave, in squalid slums and smoky,
The dactyl or the anapaest,
The glib iamb or dainty trochee.
What grim and ghastly sights are here,
What sounds accost me on my travels,
Whene'er the Muse, with vision clear,
This web of woe and crime unravels !

What themes to bid the poet pause,
In rambling o'er our giant city !
To find for envy little cause,
But find, alas, how much for pity !
And yet each day the lesson sends—
That each betimes may preach to others ;—
Divinity doth shape your ends,
Rough-hew them as ye will, my brothers.

HENRY S. LEIGH.

THE MYSTERIOUS BEAUTY.

A Romance of a German Mud Bath.

OF course I was 'altogether out of sorts,' and 'worry had told upon me.' There was no need of young Hunter, fresh from English and foreign hospitals, with all the latest scientific discoveries and the longest scientific terms at his fingers' ends, to inform me of that little fact; my own common sense could arrive at that conclusion unassisted. What did puzzle me about it was the connection between mind and matter; why a mental anxiety resulted in a shooting pain, and why the annoyance I had lately undergone should have a tendency to develop bunions. Hunter laughed when I asked him the reason of this, and then he said,

'If I were you, Mr. Slocombe, I would just run up to town one day and see Sir Percival Pylle; he is quite at the top of the profession for a case like yours, and I should feel more satisfied in treating you afterwards when you have had his opinion.'

The young man spoke modestly enough—more so than these overtaught young gentlemen of the present day are in the habit of doing—but there was a laugh in his eye all the time, and I have since led him to confess that he did not believe he should ever get me to submit to his orders unless some medical Colossus had first laid down the law in the same direction.

It was a great loss to this neighbourhood when good old Dr. Manners died. We all knew and believed in him: he had vaccinated the last three generations,

helped them through croup and measles, had lanced their babies' gums, and attended the funerals of at least half the parish twice over; and now that he was gone we none of us had the least idea how to be ill without him. Young Mr. Hunter had been with Dr. Manners for a short time before his death; but what are a few months' experience compared to that of the man who has known and physicked you from the day of your birth? So there was a little division of feeling about Hunter: the young folks, who could not be expected to have old heads on their shoulders, extolled his cleverness and skill; but we elders did not commit ourselves so unreservedly, and there was a tacit agreement amongst us that in case we had to call in the new doctor, it would be well not to trust him too fully as to our ailments, confiding to his ear such symptoms merely as we thought him capable of understanding, and reserving to ourselves our own opinions, while we took those he expressed *cum grano*.

He was quite right, though, in saying that worry had told upon me. Why, worry enough to tell upon a large family had thought proper to concentrate itself upon me, Adolphus Slocombe, a quiet single gentleman no longer walking on what is called the sunny side of fifty. First, there was that law-suit—the one, I mean, which had been dragging on for years about Crofton's Spinney; and when the case was settled this spring in my favour the expenses of litiga-

tion so nearly balanced the value of the property, that the modest sum of 7*l.* 10*s.* 4½*d.* was all the gain resulting from the trouble and anxiety of the law-suit. The wind was very much in the east, too, this spring. I remember there was a biting frost the very day my lawyer's bill came in—a frost that cut off all the young wall-fruit which a previous mild fortnight had coaxed into setting. I am partial to wall-fruit, particularly so to what is grown in my own garden; in fact, the garden is a hobby of mine, and those long red-brick walls, on which the sun shines soft and warm when other aspects are in chilly shadow, had been a sheet of blossoms pink and promising, and such as not one of all my neighbours could exhibit, only the day before.

People say calamities are apt to hunt in couples; mine came just then in a regular pack. I was trying to be quiet for a while after dinner, and, sitting in a cosy chair by the dining-room fire, had just thrown a handkerchief across my forehead, the better to think over my troubles undisturbed by the lights in the room, when a knock sounded on the door, and my housekeeper presented herself with,

'If you please, sir, could I speak to you?'

Her voice sounded rather odd, and she had a nervous way with her hands so altogether unlike herself that I knew at once some fresh catastrophe had happened, and she was come to 'break it' to me. I told her to shut the door behind her, which she did; and then, as she stood trembling and hesitating just inside the room, I added, to reassure her,

'Well, Mrs. Parker, what is it? I am afraid the cows must be ill, or one of the maids has been giving you trouble, and you want me to give her warning.'

'If you please, sir,' replied Parker, as though that really was just what she wanted.

'But which is it,' I asked—'the cows or the housemaids?'

'Please, sir,' began Mrs. Parker again; then she paused for a full minute, and finally burst out quite suddenly, 'It's me, sir, please.'

'You, Parker? I don't understand;,' which was certainly not surprising, considering the want of clearness in her remarks. However, now she had begun to speak she seemed to feel more equal to the occasion, and presently went on,

'Please, sir, it's me, sir: you said "to give warning," you know, sir.'

'O, indeed!' returned I, equally surprised and annoyed at this piece of self-assertion on the part of my old servant. 'So you think, Mrs. Parker, that it is your place rather than mine to give warning to my domestics? I cannot say that I agree with you. I give you leave to choose and select the maids for yourself, and when they disobey you and give trouble I am willing to part with them on your advice; but servants shall not enter upon or quit my service unless I engage them or dismiss them myself. You have lived with me a great many years, Parker; but I intend to be master in my own house, and there must be a limit to your powers.'

I had worked myself up into quite an angry mood by this time; as to Parker, she incontinently fell a-sobbing in the very middle of my speech.

She drew a little nearer when I paused, and, 'O Mr. Adolphus,' says she, 'my dear, dear master, 'tisn't nothing like as what you're saying. I wouldn't never go to ask for more power nor is my due here; and faithfully I've tried to do my duty to you these thirty years and more; but—but—but—'

there, sir, 'tis Sir Arthur Prynne's coachman, sir—him that has the south lodge and lost his wife a year agone last Martinmas; and if you please, sir, I'd be glad, and sorry too, indeed, sir, to leave you this day month.'

The murder was out now, but what a preposterous notion!

'My good woman, have you taken leave of your senses?' I asked.

'Please, sir—'

'But I do not please at all, Parker. Why in the world should you want to be married? It is the most ridiculous thing I ever heard of. You are as comfortable as you can possibly be here; you have a good home, good food, servants under you, and, I hope and believe, a good master.'

'Yes, sir,' sniffed through a pocket-handkerchief.

'Then,' I went on, warming with my subject, 'you have good wages, haven't you? I'll raise them if you wish it. And you have taken brevet rank, you know; why, all the parish calls you Mrs. Parker, and I do not believe there is a living soul besides myself that collects your proper style and title should be Sarah Parker, spinster. Don't you see that you have everything to lose and nothing whatever to gain in marrying Sir Arthur Prynne's coachman? Why, he has I don't know how many children, and they will be the death of you, Parker—plague your very life out. Now, do make up your mind to be a sensible woman and stay where you are, and I will see that you shall never come to want when your working days are over.'

Anybody would have thought that I had given her reasons enough, and good ones too, against this marriage; but wilful woman will have her way, and a most particularly obstinate and wilful woman Sarah Parker was

in this matter. She wanted for nothing in my house, and she had loved me all my life; but Abel Driver's sons were all out in the world, one daughter was in good service, and the others were married; and in short her fixed intention was to become the coachman's wife and live in Sir Arthur's south lodge, so I gave up the point at last, merely observing,

'Well, if you will, you must, and I shall say no more about the matter except to caution you that Driver's lodge stands very near the lake, and I have seen a thick white mist rising scores of times in that part of the park. You are subject to rheumatism, and to my certain knowledge turned sixty; so I advise you to think how it will suit your bones to be running out to open and shut the gates at all hours, before you give Abel Driver his final answer.'

Parker was not much pleased at these remarks, meant in all kindly warning; perhaps she did not like any allusion to her age: anyhow she went away at once, and left me, rather shaken by the sudden news she had brought me, to ponder over the complications and inconveniences which result from indiscriminate matrimony, and to wonder what was to become of me without my worthy house-keeper.

The next day I sent for Hunter, and two days afterwards I went to London and saw Sir Percival Pylle. There was much agreeable suavity in the great man's manner, and he listened to the account of my symptoms with an engaging smile; but when it became his turn to speak, the first word that fell from his lips was not a pretty one, nor pleasant for me to hear.

'Gout, my dear sir, nothing but gout,' laughing lightly, as though the whole matter were as simple as possible. 'Allow me to con-

gratulate you. This will add ten years to your life. A very fashionable, indeed, I may say a very aristocratic, complaint it is just now.'

Sir Percival's face broadened with a genial smile—mine lengthened. I have always had a constitutional, it may have been a prophetic, objection to gout, and now I was coolly told its clutches were already upon me.

'Really, sir,' said I, 'I cannot imagine what should lead you to say this. I am not aware of having any symptoms of this malady.'

'Of course not, of course not. Why, if people knew what was the matter with them, and how to treat themselves, where would be the use of us doctors? We should soon become only an additional item, and a rather large one, in your poor-rates. But you limped a little, Mr. Slocombe, as you entered my room; may I ask why?'

'Bunions,' I replied, with decision, 'very bad bunions.'

'But not always equally painful? Worse some days, and better others? Boots feel a good fit this week and unbearably tight the next? Bunion red, shiny, swollen, and puffy to the touch?'

I bowed my head in assent.

'Just so, just so. Call it *bunions*, Mr. Slocombe, if you please. Ha, ha! a capital joke, that; but *gout* is a shorter word to say, and a truer one; don't waste too much breath or too many syllables over your ailments.'

I was beginning to hate the pleasant laugh that made so light of my distresses, and I asked rather stiffly,

'What do you prescribe, Sir Percival?'

'Been abroad much? No? That's right. Change of air and scene will do you infinite good,

cheer up your spirits, and give you something fresh to think about. Let me see, Salzbrun, I think, will be the thing for you; charming place, very lively. Put yourself under the care of my good friend Dr. Trinkwasser; he will regulate your use of the mineral waters, and in six weeks they will make another man of you. No more *gout* then, sir. I'll write you a little prescription for present use.' (Scribble, scribble, scribble, went the long-tailed goose-quill.) 'There, sir, that note explains to Dr. Trinkwasser all that I need tell him. Start this week, if possible; *bon voyage!* Good-day; *thank you*, much obliged. *Good-morning!* And leaving a neatly-papered fee in the white hand that shook mine, I quitted the doctor's presence to think over the advice he had given me.

Presently I hailed a passing cab, and told the man to drive to my brother Herbert's address. Herbert is a clergyman, and is wearing out life and strength in an East-end parish, where his wife and children lead lives scarcely less busy than his own. Very few of the party were at home on this occasion; only half a dozen, including the father and mother, sat down to the early dinner which supplied me with lunch; but the sight of so many cheerful faces round the table was a pleasant change from my usual solitary meals. Herbert is many years younger than I am; but he married early, and the eldest of his ten children is a bright merry-looking girl of eighteen, Emmie by name. She is, moreover, my god-child, and is rather a favourite of mine, because I see no foolish nonsensical young-ladyisms about her. She does not disfigure herself with a fuzz of hair dangling over her eyes, but has nice sensible shining locks, which always look clean

and well-brushed. She was paler than usual to-day, and there was a listlessness in her manner such as I had never seen before in buoyant Emmie. I could not help remarking upon it to her mother when she was out of the room; and Miriam sighed and looked a little anxious as she answered,

'I do not think Emmie is very well, Adolphus. She had a heavy influenza cold in the spring, just after we had all been afflicted with mumps, and she has never been quite herself since. The doctor calls it lassitude and want of tone.'

'And what does he do for her?'

'He has prescribed a tonic, which she is taking regularly; but what she really wants, he says, is a thorough change of air and scene, and that, you know, we cannot give her until we take our holiday in August. She is a dear good girl, and when she is at home she will work, in hope of giving me less to do, I believe; and here Miriam's eyes began to glisten as she looked at me.

'You might have sent her down to me,' I growled; and then a thought struck me. Why should not Emmie go to Salzbrun? it would be the very thing for her, and not at all unpleasant for me to have a fresh young fellow-traveller to enjoy the sights and help me through the inevitable discomforts. Perhaps, too, Emmie's education having been so much more recently polished than my own, her powers of French conversation might be in better working order than mine, which, if not exactly the worse for wear, had certainly grown somewhat rusty from lying idle all these years; nay, more, it was possible that Emmie might have learnt German. That decided me.

'Miriam,' I said, 'will you let me take the child with me to Salzbrun next week? Of course,

you should have no expense about the trip, and I think that she and I could be very jolly together for a couple of months or so.'

The tears standing in my sister's eyes welled over on her cheeks; it would be the greatest comfort to her to let her daughter go abroad, the best possible thing for Emmie, and such a real help and kindness on my part. It seemed a relief to her to thank me; but I hate being thanked, and stopped her as soon as I could.

Emmie's look of delighted surprise when she heard the plan was worth seeing, her rapturous hug of gratitude not altogether disagreeable, provided it were not too frequently repeated; and Herbert grasped my hand more fervently than usual when I asked for his approval.

'Then, when can you be ready? Sir Percival Pylle said start this week, if possible; but I am willing to wait over Sunday for you, Emmie. Take as little luggage as you can, and meet me at Charing Cross on Tuesday morning. Will that do?'

Yes, that would give time enough for preparations, Miriam said; so I was free to go home and see about my own; and as I put a piece of paper into Emmie's hand at parting, I added, 'Mind you don't buy anything that will make you look remarkable—I am not going to travel about with a scare-crow; and if you dare to bring a heap of luggage to the station, I'll leave the half of it at Charing Cross: a single man of my age can't be going about the world in charge of a dozen of band-boxes, even if he is foolish enough to be troubled with a niece.' My mouth was stopped with kisses, and then she let me go.

Tuesday morning was clear and sunny. Herbert and Emmie were at the station before me, and it

was not without a feeling of satisfaction that I surveyed my niece. Her travelling costume was simple and well-fitting, hat and ulster equally suitable, and her luggage, dear little girl, consisted of only one moderate-sized portmanteau and the bag she carried in her hand. We started in excellent spirits; and I was not ill-pleased to hear some favourable comments, made by more than one passenger on board the steamer, on my young relative's appearance, coupled with the remark that she was evidently travelling with her father, whom she much resembled.

We did not hurry too much on our way to Salzbrun. Everything was new to Emmie, and she enjoyed it all, looking upon each small *contretemps* that befell us as only a fresh subject for fun. There never was such a girl to find amusement in trifles, which other folks would pass unnoticed, and her laugh was as clear and sunny as her fresh bright face.

It was late when we reached our destination, a very fine hotel, full of very fine visitors, in what was supposed to be the best situation in Salzbrun. I saw Dr. Trinkwasser the next morning, and, when he had directed me as to the kind and amount of mineral waters I was to swallow, we fell quickly into the ordinary routine of the place. Emmie insisted on getting up in time to go with me to the spring from which I fetched my early morning draught, and then we took the prescribed constitutional, and watched the gay assemblage passing to and fro while we listened to the lively music of an excellent band.

'Indeed, uncle, half the fun of being here is in getting up in the morning and watching the water-drinkers,' Emmie assured me. 'Did you see the faces that fat old German lady made this morn-

ing when she got her second glassful? I do believe she must be related somehow to those horrid gutta-percha dolls the children have; no merely human cheeks seem capable of going, day by day, through such contortions without getting permanently fixed in one of them. Old nurse used to tell us, when we made grimaces, that if the wind were to change that very minute we should never be able to get our natural faces again. She did frighten me so; and now I try to keep one eye on Frau Schimpf's visage and one on the weathercock; then, in case anything happened, I should be able to explain it to the doctors, and bear witness against the false inconstant winds.'

If loquacity be a sign of health, there was no longer anything amiss with my niece, for her tongue was seldom still, but rattled away incessantly whatever came into her head, and at this time it was generally nonsense that was uppermost. This Frau Schimpf, over whom she was now making merry, had acquired a certain sacredness in many eyes, not from any merit of her own, but because she was living in the character of *dame de compagnie* with the most admired inmate of our hotel—an inmate rendered all the more interesting by the slight cloud of mystery that hung about her. No one could discover Madame B.'s nationality; she might be Russian, German, Hungarian, Pole—anything almost, except French or English; and then nobody knew whether or no Monsieur B. was in existence, and 'Wife or widow?' was the unanswered inquiry made concerning her by every new arrival at the Schwartz Adler. Madame was tall, dignified, and graceful; her dress, invariably black (which settled the question of her widowhood in my mind), was made in

the latest Parisian fashion, her white hands flashed with diamond rings, a faint pink tinged her cheeks, her brows were dark and well defined, her eyes dark and lustrous; but her greatest charm of all lay in her hair. It too was dark, raven-hued, and was arranged in piles and pyramids of curls and loops and bows, with all the ingenuity of the most artistic foreign *coiffeur*; a jetty fringe fell in soft waves across her forehead; and from behind one ear a long, full, perfumed ringlet descended to her waist, or swayed gently on the breeze as she moved across the room. Madame B. was beautiful, distinguished, piquante; and this little Frau Schimpf, who sat beside her, was a short, stout, dumpy woman, unmistakably German, clad in an impossible and brilliant tartan, and given to loud speech and laughter, and the questionable habit of dipping into the salt before her the knife which, in the intervals of cutting up her meat, occasionally found its way into her mouth. Frau Schimpf was willing to chatter to any one. Madame B. talked only to her, and always in German, that detestable tongue, of which I knew not one single word.

Emmie ran up-stairs to fetch her hat, the first evening after dinner, and as she took my arm for a stroll, she asked eagerly,

‘O uncle, did you see those two ladies who sat side by side—one in black silk and the other in all the colours of the rainbow? Were not they an odd contrast? And did you ever in your life see anything like that younger lady’s hair? Do you believe it is all growing? I did so long to give the curl a little tweak to see if it would come off.’

‘My dear child,’ I said severely, for her remarks appeared to me rather flippant, ‘that is not a nice

way for you to talk; perhaps these same ladies may be wondering now whether that great brown coil at the back of your head is all your own.’

‘They may come and pull it if they like,’ returned the girl, laughing; ‘every bit of it is home produce, grown on the premises, and warranted genuine.’

‘At any rate this lady’s locks are arranged in a most artistic manner.’

‘Artistic? I should think it was!’ and Emmie was off again in one of her hearty laughs. ‘Why, uncle Adolphus, that is just the very thing that tickles my fancy. It is *too* artistic, *too* unnatural; I am sure Eve never wore her hair in that style, nor Venus, nor—nor anybody that ever was taken for a model,’ urged the girl, getting a trifle confused in her examples of style.

‘Hair-pins and curling-tongs were not invented in those early days,’ said I, trying to be repressive. ‘What a remarkably fine sunset we are having!’

Emmie followed my lead, and we talked of the beauty of the evening, and the wonderful effects of sunset colouring in different states of the atmosphere; but my thoughts, I must confess, were busied still with the beautiful being whom my eyes detected in the hotel gardens below us. How utterly unlike my early dreams and visions, and yet what an adorable creature she was! This was, perhaps, rather more than I allowed to myself on that first evening; but day by day my admiration for Madame B. deepened, and I began to contrast with her all other women of my acquaintance, but always to their disparagement. Even Emmie, my bright little niece, lost something of her piquancy during this process. Inclined to admire all that was foreign, the

smooth shining hair parted on Emmie's forehead looked to me now 'so dreadfully English.' I had always thought Miriam a sensible woman for forbidding her girls to disfigure themselves with fringes—*idiot fringes*, I had called them, when in my ignorance I aided and abetted her decision. Ah, well! one's mind grows broader with more varied experience, and mine now widened fast, until I positively longed to see some wandering tendrils straying across my niece's brow, if a row of bright wavy locks was impossible for her. I did not tell her so then, and I was glad afterwards that I had been wise enough to avoid the subject.

We were by no means the only inmates of our hotel to whom the beautiful unknown became an object of interest. Her eyes, her hair, her diamonds, her languid grace, were topics often dwelt on in the smoking-room; and as I sat puffing silently my evening pipe of peace, I gleaned at last a few facts concerning her. Madame B. had come to Salzbrun for her health, but what was the matter with her nobody knew. Frau Schimpf came for health too, but she was also the lady's paid companion. Every morning when we went to the spring for my draught of mineral water, the dumpy little German was there before us getting hers also; but the stately beauty never came. And at last I learned that, instead of drinking the waters like the vulgar herd of us, Madame B. was amongst the selecter few for whom a course of mud-baths only was prescribed. Emmie's mirth had been greatly excited at the notion of these baths, and she was always begging me to let her try one, 'just for the fun of it,' because she was 'convinced that they must make one feel like an eel or a tadpole, and she want-

ed to find out which of the two it was.' The very mention of such creatures in connection with the baths seemed a positive insult to Madame B.

When we had been about ten days at Salzbrun, a sad thing happened. Little Gretchen, the smiling *Mädchen* who used to fill up, from the spring which Frau Schimpf and I frequented, the glasses handed to her by the drinkers, was missing one morning; a stranger was in her place, and presently the story flew from mouth to mouth that the poor child had been knocked down by a runaway horse the previous evening; her leg was broken, and broken badly. Anna, who had come to do her work, said the little maiden was in sore pain, but brave and patient, and that the Herr Doctor had shaken his head and looked very grave about the accident.

The morning sunshine shone less bright than usual that day to many who heard the tale, for Gretchen's modest behaviour and pleasant courtesy had made her a favourite with all her customers. The lively music of the band failed to inspirit us, and when Emmie and I had taken our compulsory walk, and fetched in little paper bags the rolls that were to serve for our breakfast, we sat down sadly and gravely enough, at a little table under the shady trees, to drink our coffee.

'Can't we do anything for Gretchen, uncle?'

'We can give her some money,' I suggested; 'doctors cost more than she can afford, poor child.'

Just then Frau Schimpf, who was breakfasting at a table near us, and with whom Emmie had occasionally exchanged a few words, turned round and said something to her in German. And then followed a conversation, in the course

of which my niece learnt fuller particulars of the recent accident. It appeared that Gretchen was the eldest child of a large family, and the only member of it besides the mother capable of earning anything. That mother was a widow, herself too delicate to be able to work much; and now the poor girl's weekly wage must cease, for she could never be well enough this summer to resume her post. 'Even if she ever does get well enough,' continued the German lady, 'I have seen the Herr Doctor only this last half-hour, and he says her injuries are so severe he cannot yet tell whether she may not have to lose her leg, and then what would become of them? Gretchen, even with a wooden leg, would not be able to stoop fast enough to fill the visitors' glasses another season, and what else could she do? Besides,' added the good woman reflectively, 'a wooden leg is expensive; it wears out—you have to buy another. Gretchen is young; she may live long enough to need a dozen wooden legs before she dies, to say nothing of sticks and crutches.' And as Emmie translated to me this dolorous suggestion, Frau Schimpf finished her repast and walked away.

We found that Gretchen's accident had created quite a little excitement at the Schwartz Adler, where many of her customers were staying; and before dinner-time the general desire to help the little maiden had taken definite form, and it was unanimously decided that the visitors at the hotel should get up an entertainment something in the style of penny readings at home for her benefit. It was to come off as soon as possible, while the interest was at its height; and ardent spirits amongst us formed themselves into a committee of management, and went about the house, knocking at every one's

door in search of talent of all kind to swell their programme for the following Tuesday. Emmie and I were requested to give our valuable services; but happily the house contained so many stars more brilliant than ourselves that we were permitted to sink into contented insignificance after purchasing our five franc tickets for the entertainment.

It was wonderfully well got up: somehow these things arrange themselves more easily and simply amongst foreigners than with us, and the number of performers was astonishing. There was a gentleman who played the flute, another who accompanied his wife's pianoforte music on the violoncello, several amateur singers with voices far above the average, brilliant pianists and violinists, besides readers and reciters in French, English, and German, to suit all tastes. The landlord placed his big *salon* at the disposal of the committee, and Emmie assisted a bevy of ladies to deck its walls with flowers and evergreens, while the non-performing gentlemen, myself amongst them, went to and fro executing their sometimes rather contradictory orders. Amongst them all I looked in vain for Madame B. What a sweet retiring disposition she must have! I thought, for she is never visible except at dinner-time; but by and by Frau Schimpf came bustling in, and presently Emmie ran up to me with a translation of that worthy woman's latest remarks.

'She says we shall have a treat indeed this evening, uncle, for Madame B. has at last consented, under extreme pressure, to recite in German.'

'Admirable woman!' said I, which was what I thought; but Emmie fancied it was spoken ironically, and went on to rebuke me gently.

'You shouldn't laugh at her,' she said; 'it really must be horrid to have to stand up and *spout* before all these people; and I don't wonder it took a lot of coaxing to persuade her to do it. I don't think even you, my much and deservedly beloved uncle, would ever be able to induce me to perform in public.'

'And if I could, my dear, you would not be worth hearing,' returned I; for we were on terms of friendly chaff, and I liked her to get occasionally as good as she gave.

Presently she came back to me.

'Our latest bulletin,' she whispered: 'Madame B. is by no means unaccustomed to public speaking; she has *un talent*, and is in the habit of exercising it at some sort of club—*Verein* they call it—in Berlin.'

This upset the modest violet theory; but, after all, the glorious rose which basks in fullest sunshine is a finer flower; anyway, there was much to admire in the lady; and when at the appointed hour she was handed, by two or three gentlemen in waiting, to the front of the extempore platform in the *salon*, and stood there self-possessed and stately in her trailing black silk robe, while her audience clapped a welcome, I declare my heart went pit-a-pat with excitement, just as though I were a boy of nineteen.

The lady waited for silence with downcast eyes, but when the room was hushed into stillness she raised them suddenly with a quick change of expression, and in a rich clear voice began to speak in German. That there were rhymes in what she recited even my ignorant ears could catch, but the extraordinary thing about it was the incessant repetition of my own name in every variety of tone, now playful, now tender, now coaxing,

now petulant; and once when her accent was especially caressing, the dark eyes rested for an instant on my face, bringing a tinge of red above my respectable British whiskers. What was it all about? Was it possible that Madame B. was acquainted with my Christian name? that she was conscious of my fervent admiration, and not displeased by it? And here I became aware that Emmie was indulging in a paroxysm of laughter and delight beside me, while a storm of rapturous applause burst out all over the room as the melodious voice ceased and Madame B. bowed her acknowledgments. She came back again and recited something else—of which I could not understand a word—before Emmie had time to explain the first piece, but I hardly listened now: I was sitting in a strangely delicious dream. Adolph? yes, certainly that was the German for my own name Adolphus, but never had I imagined the variety of sweet inflections with which that name could be uttered. After all, the shorter form was the more sensible of the two; I began to wonder how 'Adolph Slocombe, Esq.,' would look on my letters, while the bewitching tones still sounding seemed to me to repeat ever and ever the same word, Adolph. How good it would be, when one came home tired from a long day on the Bench, to be greeted by that soft caressing voice! how pleasant to pour out all one's grievances—and mine are always pretty numerous—to a listener who must be the very embodiment of sympathy! I had met married people before now who seemed quite happy. Might not a wife be, after all, a greater comfort than even a housekeeper like Parker? One's wife could not give warning because she was going to be married to somebody's coachman.

'I shall always call you uncle Adolph in future,' cried Emmie, breaking in upon my reverie. 'It is a much prettier name than Adolphus, and ever so much shorter. O, dear, I do wish I could say it in half as many different ways as Madame B. can!'

'But what was it all about?'

'O, I beg your pardon, uncle. I forgot you did not understand. It was just the loveliest thing you ever heard. The poem begins by saying not exactly "what's in a name?" but by suggesting that we hardly know what there *is* in it until we try to use it under a great variety of circumstances; and then it takes a common German name, Adolph, and puts it into the mouth of a girl who is talking to her lover; and sometimes she pets him, and sometimes she pretends to scold him, or to take offence, and then she is in despair at parting from him, and overjoyed to meet again. You could make out all that for yourself, couldn't you, from the way Madame B. pronounced your name?'

'I never heard anything to equal her; it is wonderfully clever.'

'She must have had plenty of practice, mustn't she?' remarked Emmie, taking a view of the matter which fell rather like a wet blanket on my enthusiasm. 'I expect she has recited that poem dozens of times before. You see she says it off by heart, and Frau Schimpf told me she is accustomed to immense audiences in Berlin, and thinks nothing at all of the people here.'

Our entertainment was an undeniable success, and the committee were able to hand over for Gretchen's use a sum of money sufficient to keep the little maiden in comfort for many months to come. Its results, so far as I was concerned, were less happy. My

thoughts would wander off too constantly to Madame B. My fancy pictured her sitting, always in a black silk dress, at the head of my table, listening graciously while my friends and neighbours did their best to amuse her, for she was not the sort of woman whom one would expect to exert herself to be entertaining, except perhaps on very special occasions. But how was I to know her better? I could hardly be said to know her at all as yet; she understood no English—I, no German. Clearly the first step towards further acquaintance would be for me to overleap that barrier, if we were ever to exchange a word. I began to show small civilities to the *dame de compagnie*, who took them in very good part; and listening to the ease and fluency with which she rattled off her native language, it appeared to me that speaking German must really be an easier simpler thing than I used to imagine, and I resolved to set to work at once to pick up all I could of it. *Ja, nein*, those were words I knew already, and I had learnt to call *Kellner* in commanding tones whenever there were any orders to be given through Emmie to the waiters. I would go a little further now; and one day, when the child had been telling me some long story of her adventures while I had been writing letters, I drew myself up, and replied complacently,

'*Ach, so.*' But Emmie was not impressed, as I had expected her to be, by my proficiency; indeed, she took it quite the wrong way, for she leant back in her chair with a burst of laughter that surprised me, and as soon as she could speak exclaimed,

'My dearest uncle Adolph' (she had called me so ever since the memorable Tuesday night), 'you really are too funny. When

I come down to stay with you in the winter we will get up some private theatricals, and you will bring the house down. I had not the faintest notion you were such a mimic; it is inimitable, just her very tone and manner to the life.'

'Whose tone and manner?' I asked faintly, trying to look unconscious.

'Why, Frau Schimpf's, of course; it could not be any one else. O uncle Adolph, what a shame of you to be so civil to the poor old thing, when all the time you were doing it only to get that up! Do say it again, though; I can't think how you could contrive to catch her voice and accent so completely.'

But I did not say it again, and, to tell the truth, that was the very last attempt I ever made to talk German.

We were wandering about next morning, in the direction of the ladies' mud-baths, when our attention was suddenly caught by loud screams proceeding from one of them, as of somebody in deadly fear. Several people came running to the spot; there was a commotion both inside and outside the building, and at last the word *Schlange*—snake—began to pass from mouth to mouth. Was there a viper in one of the ladies' baths? The idea appeared too horrible. Poor Emmie turned pale at the thought, and asked anxiously if German snakes were dangerous; but not two people gave her the same answer, and at last the brilliant suggestion occurred to her that it might, perhaps, be only an eel.

I looked at my watch, and found it was already past the time for my second glass of mineral water, and Emmie decided to stay where she was while I went in search of it, in the hopes of hearing the end of this strange affair. Twenty

minutes later I returned, to find her leaning for support against a tree, exhausted by mirth, which burst out afresh at sight of me, while every face I met was expanded into a broad grin.

'O uncle Adolph, it is too ridiculous!' she panted, as she ran up to me and seized my arm.

'What do you think it was? It was Madame B.'s bath, you know; and after she got into it she felt something in the mud, and she thought it was a snake, and screamed and made a tremendous fuss; and the bath-people came rushing to help her, and they got sticks and rakes and poked about in the mud, and O! what do you think they found in the bath?'

'Surely not the eel you suggested?' I asked faintly.

'A curl, uncle Adolph! just that very identical long black curl you thought so beautiful! and it had got all straight and horrid in the mud, and really must have been unpleasantly like a snake to put one's foot on. But that is not all,' she went on, 'for it seems that poor Madame is bald, absolutely bald, and all those bows and fringes are nothing but a wig, and take on and off like a helmet; and to-day she must have been thinking of something else, for she stepped into her bath with the hair on, and this curl dropped into the mud. I do feel sorry for her, for when the people showed her what they had found, she was so angry that they say she tore the rest of the wig off her head, and threw it at them in a passion. So now everybody in the place will know that Madame B. is bald and artificially got up, and I should not wonder if the discovery drove her quite away from Salzbrun at once.'

Emmie was right: that very afternoon the two ladies left the place, taking leave of none, and

not caring to face any of their former companions. At night the subject was discussed at *table d'hôte*; fresh incidents were supplied, dull witticisms were made about Medusa and her snaky locks, and those who had before been most inclined to offer incense at the shrine of Madame B. were foremost now in hinting that her teeth, her eyebrows, and the faint pink colour in her cheeks were one and all as artificial as her hair. As for me, I held my tongue. Nobody, not even Emmie, had the least suspicion of my budding *tendresse* for the fascinating widow, and by and by some further particulars became known about her. Her husband, a wealthy jeweller of Berlin, had been dead about two years, and had probably bequeathed to her, amongst much else, the diamond hoops which flashed so brightly on her pretty hands.

My dream was over, I had been rudely awakened. Not for the sake of hearing 'Adolph' murmured all day long in the soft accents of that dulcet voice could I, an English country gentleman, for a moment contemplate allying myself with the made-up widow of a German shopkeeper, however beautiful and attractive her appearance might be in full 'war-paint.' No, I would go back to my old home and my old ways, and forget the foreign siren who had dazzled me for a while.

We stayed on at Salzbrun until my course of water-drinking was over, and then, after a fortnight's tour through other parts of Germany, I brought my niece home with me to the Manor House, under the pretext that her aid was absolutely necessary in organising the *régime* of my new housekeeper, successor to Parker.

Emmie has grown very dear to me in all these weeks that we have spent together. I do not think

it would be quite fair to ask her parents to let her live with me entirely and be my adopted daughter; but I have been trying on one excuse and another to lengthen out her stay, and fondly hoped the Manor House would be a second home to her, and that at least half her time would in future be spent with me.

But what is the use of planning? My fine schemes were all knocked on the head this morning, in the course of an hour's conversation, and I and my projects are simply nowhere in the new state of things.

I was standing on my doorstep after breakfast, smoking calmly and at peace with all mankind, when young Fred Willoughby came riding up the drive.

'Hullo, young man,' said I, 'why are you not after the hounds this morning? You can't have better weather in November, and you won't find any fox in this direction, take my word for it.'

Fred reddened as he pulled off his hat and sprang to the ground, and he reddened rather more as, glancing across the lawn to where Emmie, having given him a nod of welcome, was playing with a couple of young puppies, he answered,

'It is rather a dove than a fox that I have come in pursuit of to-day, Mr. Slocombe. Can you give me ten minutes in the study?'

In less than that time he had poured out a fervid declaration of his devotion to my niece, of his parents' approval of his choice, and would I—could I give him any hope that Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Slocombe would ever be persuaded to allow him to marry their daughter? I gathered from his remarks, incoherent as they were at times, that Miss Emmie had already given him to understand that there would be no insuperable objections on her side,

if her parents and I had none to make; and he had heard my brother was expected down to-day, and came to get round me, and enlist me on his side, before encountering Herbert. Of course he soon persuaded me. Fred is a thoroughly good fellow, the son of old and tried friends, and can promise his wife a future fairly free from any money anxieties. He is evidently much attached to Emmie, and I believe will make her truly happy. So, by and by, we shall have another wedding, and then I know exactly how it will be in the future. History, they say, repeats itself. So somebody's marriage will incon-

venience me; I shall lose my head housekeeper in Emmie. There will be bad times for the garden again next spring, I know there will, and I shall be worried and out of sorts, and shall suffer from *bunions*, or something else, and then Hunter will send me to Sir Percival Pylle for good advice. I see the whole programme before me, like some dreadful nightmare; but I can be firm upon occasions, and I do solemnly declare that nothing, not even the advice of the most learned and fashionable of physicians, shall ever again induce me to seek for health in the neighbourhood of a German mud-bath.

S. M. GIDLEY.

IN CLOVER—A JUNE SONG.

THERE is clover, honey-sweet,
Thick and tangled at our feet;
Crimson-spotted lies the field,
Blood-blotted like a warrior's shield,
Where the poppies, full of scorn,
Proudly wave above the corn.
There is music at our feet
In the clover, honey-sweet.

You may track the winds that blow
Through the cornfields as they go;
From the wheat, as from a sea,
Springs the lark in ecstasy.
Now the bloom is on the blade
In the sun and in the shade.
There is music at our feet
In the clover, honey-sweet.

A BYWAY NEAR TORQUAY, DEVONSHIRE.

THIS engraving is from a delightful picture by Mr. Albert F. Bellows (National Academician), a distinguished American *genre* painter. The subject gives a view of a farm-lane embowered in trees, leading, perhaps, from the village street, where the cottages cluster in the distance, to the foreground brook. Across the pool a huge log has been thrown, and another projects over the water; and from this causeway two girls, with rods and lines, are fishing.

The suggestive power of our lovely Devonshire scenery has been well expressed by the Rev. H. J. Whitfield, in this passage, which we take from his *Rambles* through the county:

'Like Italy, Devonshire possesses "the fatal gift of beauty," and the heart has no language in which to embody its devotion. Beyond Torquay the windings of the coast are full of charms. Sometimes the sea hides itself in little coves, as at Watcombe and Babbicombe. Sometimes there is a memory of Genoa, in marble terraces, like those of Bishopstowe. And Teignmouth and Dawlish and Powderham, and the cathedral towers in the valley of the Exe, and Sidmouth and Exmouth; and even, faraway, the blue shadow of Portland, plead each their own cause to hearts that confess their claims. There are ruins, too, for the antiquarian; and "Kent's Hole"

has a voice from the primeval past. Yet in these things dwells and lingers a spirit and a mystery, not always felt, but dependent on the sense within. It was well said that the squire in Cervantes wandered amid sierras and moonlit forests, and glided on the beautiful stream of the Ebro, without for a moment forgetting the hope of pelf that had drawn him from his village. So we are compelled to offer an apology for romance, although the imagination kindles amid scenes so fair. It is no sign of weakness to be so moved. In the poetry of Nature, in the associations of old times, in the legendary tale, there is an interest common to all. Listen to what Plato says: "You must not oblige me to show that the things which I produce in this discourse are actually matters of fact." So Schlegel affirmed of the Spanish ballads: "Religion and fiction, truth and poetry, are not made to stand at variance with each other, but are all united in the most harmonious beauty." The highest order of intellects best comprehends this great fact. Even in ancient days St. Bernard said: "You will find more in the woods than in books; the forests and the rocks will teach you what you cannot learn of the greatest masters." And in this fairyland of the West there is enjoyment and admiration, and profit also, for the thoughtful and pious heart.'



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A BYWAY NEAR TORQUAY, DEVONSHIRE.
FROM THE PICTURE BY ALBERT F. BELLAWS.

See p. 81.



TOURIST HINTS.

A Forgotten College and its Neighbourhood.

EVERY one knows that South Wales is to have a University, and that Cardiff and Swansea have been eagerly competing for the honour of being selected as the seat of the future centre of learning; but every one may not be aware that between these two thriving seaports, and centuries before either of them came into existence, there stood, in what is now an obscure town, a famous college whose reputation not only spread throughout Britain, but even drew scholars from all parts of Europe.

Few Londoners, probably, have ever heard of Llantwit Major, a quaint little watering-place on the Welsh coast, about seventeen miles from Cardiff. And yet it is an interesting spot, for it has a history reaching back beyond the Dark Ages, to a far-off day in the fifth century, when St. Germanus founded here the college which afterwards bore the name of St. Illtyd, its first superior. Some authorities state that Germanus only *revived* an institution which had fallen into decay; but however that may be, the college under Illtyd's fostering care grew and flourished, and became celebrated throughout the Continent for the learning and piety of its members and scholars.

St. Illtyd is reputed to have lived to a very advanced age, and to have continued at the head of the institution for the almost incredible period of ninety years. Among his pupils were some who afterwards ranked amongst the most distinguished men of their time, and whose names have been handed down to us through the

long vista of ages: Talhaiarn and Taliesin, the celebrated bards; Gildas, the historian; St. Teilo, Bishop of Landaff; Samson, Archbishop of Dol; Paulinus, Bishop of Leon in Spain; Macutius or Maclovius, first Bishop of St. Malo; and David, Archbishop of Cearleon, who afterwards removed the episcopal see to St. David's, and ultimately became the patron saint of Wales. To Llan Illtyd — of which name Llantwit is simply a corruption — came also the sons of British nobles and foreign princes; and at one time the numbers of students who flocked hither from all parts of Christendom are said to have exceeded two thousand, and for the accommodation of this large number there were four hundred sleeping apartments and seven large halls.

After flourishing for many generations as a kind of British University, frequented by illustrious persons from all countries, the fortunes of St. Illtyd's suffered a serious reverse soon after the Conquest, when the greater portion of its revenues were transferred by Robert Fitz-Hamon to the Abbey of Tewkesbury. The College, however, though with diminished income and abated glory, continued to exist until the Reformation — when Henry VIII. seized its remaining revenues — when it was finally closed, and its buildings gradually fell into decay.

The College House stood adjacent to the existing church on the north side, while the monastery, halls, and other buildings were

situated to the north-west. Of these a few crumbling ruins remained as late as 1815, but they have now well-nigh disappeared; the grass grows green on the site of this once renowned seat of learning, and they who would seek for relics of the past must seek below the sod.

Llantwit Church is dedicated to St. Illtyd, and is said to be the oldest church in Wales. It was erected, according to an old ms., by Robert Neville, Earl of Warwick and Lord of Glamorgan. It is a large and somewhat singular edifice, for, in addition to that portion of it in which divine service is performed, there is an older building on the west side of the tower to which it is attached. Out of this part of the structure a door opens into what was once the Lady Chapel. The more modern church has an old and handsome altar-piece; and in the churchyard, as well as in the church itself, there are a number of ancient and interesting monuments, said to have been brought from a place called the Great House, where another church is supposed to have stood.

The only other building calling for remark which Llantwit possesses is the Town-hall, which stands between the main street and the church. Although of much larger dimensions, it resembles in appearance those old buildings which, in some places, are called court-houses or church-houses. Doubtless it has served many purposes in its time. Some years since it was used as the village school-house, and shrill childish voices resounded through the ancient chamber, and little hasty, noisy feet went pattering up and down the double flight of steps at one end by which it is approached. A bell formerly hung over it, and when this was

removed in 1815, it was found to bear the inscription, 'Ora pro nobis, Sancte Illtude.' Tradition says that the bell was presented by the Pope to St. Illtyd.

The town is pleasantly situated on rising ground, about a mile from the sea, and the large area over which it is scattered, and the number of roads which converge towards it as to a common centre, show it to have been once a place of no little importance. The way to the shore lies through a pretty, winding, green vale called Colhugh, at the mouth of which formerly stood the port of that name, from whence a considerable trade was at one time carried on with the coasts of Somersetshire; and the dialect of that county is said to have been prevalent here within the memory of men living at the commencement of the present century. Great changes, however, took place on this part of the coast. It became dangerous, and was avoided by vessels; and of the ancient harbour which, in the reign of Henry VIII., afforded shelter to ships passing up and down the Bristol Channel, the only traces that remain are the foundations of the pier, and the piles of wood that defended it on the western side, which, notwithstanding the great encroachments of the sea, are, or were some years ago, still visible at low water.

Llantwit, which had grown and flourished during the palmy days of its college, appears to have begun to decline in the reign of Henry VII., when it lost its municipal privileges. In the following reign its college was suppressed, and lastly—as has been related—its trade was ruined. Its misfortunes were now complete; it gradually sank into obscurity; many of its houses fell into ruins, and it assumed the

appearance of a large dilapidated town or village.

Within the last few years, however, a railway in connection with the Great Western has been opened direct to Llantwit, and this probably has infused new life into the place. Very possibly the clean little old-fashioned shops are now giving way to establishments of plate-glass, and the homely, roomy old farmhouses to rows of pert new villas; and by many, perhaps, the change would be considered an improvement. But however that may be, and whatever the appearance now presented by this ancient collegiate town, it was, in the days when the writer knew it—when the iron horse came no nearer than Llantrissant, and an omnibus that ran twice a week to Cardiff was the only public mode of conveyance—a delightfully quaint and primitive spot. Not only was it pervaded by a refreshing air of old-fashioned simplicity, but the memorials of bygone days which lay around appealed to the imagination, and invested it with the romantic interest that always attaches to fallen greatness. Strangers naturally fell into what the inhabitants deemed the *error* of calling it a village; but as often as they did so they would be corrected by some Llantwit-onian with the mild remark that Llantwit was a *town*; and he would be an ill-mannered stranger who would refuse to humour the amiable weakness of civil honest folk jealous for the dignity of their native place.

In the summer a few visitors came for sea-bathing, but they were chiefly of the lower classes. Visitors of a better social position were comparatively rare, and became, to a certain extent, the objects of friendly interest and curiosity. Having once been to Llantwit, one wondered why the

place was not more frequented; for, in addition to its other attractions, it was healthy and inexpensive, provisions easily obtainable, the mutton small and sweet, and the bread particularly wholesome and delicious. Lodgings, however, were not numerous, and had to be secured beforehand; and those quarters were the most comfortable where the goodwife only opened her doors to visitors whom she knew, and more as a favour to them than as a source of profit to herself. The interiors were simple and unpretending, and the dim outlines of a certain parlour linger yet in the writer's memory. It was large and low, with the door and small lattice-window placed oddly close together in a corner, leaving the greater part of the room in shadow, the fireplace being situated where the shadows fell deepest. In the opposite corner there was a large cupboard in a deep recess; a horsehair sofa was placed against the wall; and behind the door stood an old grand piano with yellow keys and jingling notes, which, in spite of its deficiencies, was a great resource in wet weather; a few chairs and a couple of tables completed the furniture of the apartment.

The parish of Llantwit is large, and the district it comprises appears to have been inhabited from a remote time. Some writers are of opinion that Boverton—a small village within its limits—was the site of *Bovium*, placed in the Itineraries on the line of the *Julia Via Maritima*, between the stations of *Isca Silurum* (Cearleon) and *Nidum* (Neath); and this opinion is supported by the fact that Roman coins have, at different times, been dug up in the vicinity. There are also the remains of an old Roman camp at a spot called Castle Ditches on

the summit of the cliff overlooking the sea on the eastern side of the valley of Colhugh.

The country round Llantwit is purely agricultural, and the soil, of which the substratum is Lias limestone, is rich and fertile. It is a fine open country, and though its scenery is not distinguished by any striking peculiarity, it is rich in the beautiful and picturesque, and is occasionally marked by features of romantic grandeur.

In the matter of walks and drives there is an almost endless variety; for the narrow, devious streets once trodden by eager students, by cowed monks and sapient philosophers, extend themselves into the country in almost every direction, and become shadowy green lanes, with steep banks covered with ferns and flowers and tall hedge-rows full of clematis, dog-roses, and scented honeysuckle. In the olden time many a gallant train, bound for the British University, swept along these byways now so silent and deserted, and many a pupil of St. Illtyd learned to till the ground in the rich fields which lie around; for husbandry and other useful arts were included in the scheme of education by this good and learned man, whose name, by the way, yet lingers in the neighbourhood, and is to be met with in the families of both great and small. Choose which you will of these numerous lanes, it is sure to prove interesting and picturesque. Some wind along near the coast, while others dive into the heart of the country, and lead you on by tinkling brooks, through sleepy hamlets and sylvan solitudes, past gray old churches, quaint chapels, and cheerful wayside farmhouses with gardens gay with summer flowers. Gaunt windmills dot the landscape here and there, and undulating meadows

and smiling cornfields are broken at intervals by narrow gullies running down to the sea. The shore is rough and rocky, and the cliffs rise abruptly, and in many places to a considerable height. Along the edge of the cliffs runs the Mariner's Path, a delightful walk in summer-time. We may follow it for miles, sometimes walking on short soft turf, sometimes passing through fields of wheat or oats or new-mown hay; now dipping into a lonely gorge or skirting a tiny bay, and anon gaining higher ground overlooking the Channel from St. Athan's on the east to Nash Point on the west, with its rocks and dangerous sands and its two tall lighthouses on the cliff which sometimes stand out distinct against a background of threatening clouds, and at others are almost lost to sight against a sky of fairest blue. When the weather is clear the houses on the opposite coast are plainly visible, and even the lights and shadows playing on the hillside may be distinguished.

One of the first places in the neighbourhood which a stranger would probably wish to visit is St. Donat's Castle, which lies on the coast about two miles west of Llantwit. We may either drive thither or walk along the Mariner's Path. If we choose the latter course we shall pass a place called Tressillian, where there is a huge cave on the beach that *deserves* some old tradition, but which does not appear to be remarkable for anything but a silly superstition which assigns good fortune to the individual who, lying on his back on the floor of the cave, can succeed in throwing a pebble over a natural arch in its roof.

About half a mile further on we come to St. Donat's.

The old castle is picturesquely situated on the eastern or left

bank of a deep ravine which runs down to the sea and opens upon a small sheltered cove. It is the only baronial building in the country which, having been always inhabited, has been preserved without material alteration. It is a noble pile, and its stately beauty is enhanced by its position, so that there are few castles that can rival it. Its gray battlements rise above masses of green foliage; its proud towers command the sea; terraced gardens radiant with flowers descend to the shore; and down in the romantic dell on the right the tiny parish church nestles close under the shadow of its walls. As a fortress it does not appear to have had a very eventful history, for its name is not associated with any celebrated siege or battle; neither does it appear in the *Liber Landavensis* nor in any of the earlier British traditional records. A stone over the portcullis entrance states that the castle was commenced A.D. 1007; and after the Conquest and the subjection of this part of the Principality by Fitz-Hamon and his Norman knights the lordship of St. Donat's was given to Sir William le Esterling, or Stradling, in the possession of whose descendants it continued without interruption for more than seven hundred years, until, upon the death of Sir Thomas Stradling, Bart., who died at Montpelier on the 27th of April 1738, at the early age of twenty-eight, the direct line became extinct.

The Stradlings were much esteemed in their native county of Glamorgan. In the time of the Civil War the head of the house, his son and grandson, and five cadets bore arms for the king, and shared in the pecuniary losses that fell to the lot of the vanquished party. Several members

of the family were graduates of Oxford; and Sir Edward Stradling, who fought for Charles at Edgehill and died in June 1644, was buried in the chapel of Jesus College, Oxford. In earlier times more than one baronet visited the Holy Land. One of these, Sir Harry Stradling, in the sixteenth year of Edward IV. met with an unpleasant adventure at home ere he started on his foreign travels. He was kidnapped when crossing the Channel in sight of his own castle by Colyn Dolphyn, a Breton pirate, who demanded two thousand marks for his ransom. To raise this large sum the manors of Sutton in Glamorgan, Bassaleg, Rogerston, and Tregwillim in Monmouth, and two manors in Oxfordshire were sold. Sir Edward Stradling, who died in 1609, spent some time in Rome. It was he who built the sea-wall at St. Donat's and founded the library.

After the untimely death of the last lord of St. Donat's, which was much lamented in the county, the castle passed into the hands of distant members of the family, litigation ensued, and the building fell out of repair. In 1860 the castle and estate came into the possession of Dr. Stradling Carne, D.C.L., the present proprietor, who claims to be the next representative of the house of Stradling. Dr. Carne at once set about the rebuilding of his fine old castle, of which he may well be proud; but although he has spent more than thirty thousand pounds upon it, and has restored forty-two rooms out of seventy, the work is still unfinished, and will not be completed for many years to come. It was in the days of its humiliation that the writer first saw St. Donat's. Then strangers could wander unchecked through a large portion of the building;

its walls were broken, its courts grass-grown, its terraces desolate, and the bunches of red valerian that grew in the chinks of the time-worn masonry, and waved their bright blossoms in the summer breeze, seemed to emphasise the ruin that lay around. Now all is changed; and to the brave old castle which has weathered the storms of many centuries, which has survived the rapacity of lawyers and the neglect of aliens, happier times have come again, and one cannot but rejoice at the change, and indulge the hope that the sun of prosperity may long shine on its ancient walls.

The village of St. Donat's is a quaint little place, and the church down in the dell, with its Stradling monuments in wood and stone, is well worthy of a visit. In the churchyard there is an ancient and beautiful cross, probably the only un mutilated example in a county in which they were once numerous. On the western bank of the ravine stands a tall watch-tower, said to have been erected by the Sir Harry Stradling captured by the Breton pirate. It would appear that the lord of St. Donat's did not cause a very strict watch to be kept therein, or the presence of suspicious craft in the Channel would probably have been discovered.

Of the fine herd of black cattle belonging to the castle the writer retains a vivid and not altogether pleasing recollection; for crossing a field in which they were grazing, in company with a friend, the animals, after staring at us in a threatening manner for a few minutes, made a steady and determined rush. Fortunately the writer's friend had noticed in time the menacing appearance of the monarch of the herd, and by a hasty flight and nimble jump over

a gate we were enabled to escape a disastrous and perhaps fatal termination to our evening walk.

A pleasant drive of four miles from Llantwit in a different direction brings us to the town of Cowbridge, with its wide main street and its celebrated old grammar school. At Llanblethian, a neighbouring village, John Sterling spent five years of his childhood. Happy years they must have been, for he seems to have loved the place; and in one of his earliest printed pieces,* written in his twenty-first year, he gives an elaborate description of it. He delights to mention every feature of the locality: the house on the sunny slope, 'with a little orchard stretching down before it and a garden rising behind;' the brook, the bridge, and the mill; the old castle of St. Quentin's crowning a green eminence, and the aged yew on the breezy hill-top, from which, as a child, he loved to think Norman archers might have cut their bows. Carlyle, in his *Life of Sterling*, appears to have been himself acquainted with Llanblethian, and describes it in the following words: 'Llanblethian hangs pleasantly: with its white cottages, and orchard and other trees, on the western slope of a green hill; looking far and wide over green meadows and little or bigger hills in the pleasant plain of Glamorgan; a short mile to the south of Cowbridge, to which smart little town it is properly a kind of suburb. . . . Its effect from the distance on the eastward is very pretty; you see it like a little sleeping cataract of white houses with trees overshadowing and fringing it; and there the cataract hangs and does not rush away from you.'

M. C. HALIFAX.

* *Literary Chronicle*, New Series, London, Saturday, 21st June 1828, art. 2.

AN UNPLEASANT PREDICAMENT.

If there is one thing in this world that I hate more than another, it is an evening-party, whether it take the form of tea, music, and twaddle, or come in the more awful guise of a regular dance. Unfortunately I am short and ill-favoured. Indeed, I can well remember even now the rage and grief which possessed my youthful mind when I discovered that I was called 'The Toad' by my school-companions; and how that our old coachman, who was my ally and confidant in those days, could find no better words of consolation than 'Never you mind, Master Jack; you let 'em talk, a pack o' young imperences. What *I* says is 'andsome is as 'andsome does.' Time has but accentuated my many personal defects, of which I am painfully conscious, and the result is that I am shy, *gauche*, and nervous in society. I blush a brick red when any one speaks to me, and I turn positively purple when (an event which very seldom happens, by the way) any fair member of the other sex vouchsafes me a remark. I have about as much ear for music as a jackass. I covet, but most certainly do not possess, that power of talking fluently about nothing, which is so necessary to the aspirant for social distinction, while my few attempts at dancing raise the accustomed blush upon my face when I even think of them. Judge, then, whether I am likely to shine in the ranks of those gilded youths whose spotless shirt-fronts and gloves, whose faultless swallow-tailed coats and resplendent shining shoes (I regret to say

no Crispin's art has as yet prevailed to force my feet into anything like comeliness) adorn the saloons where the giddy (alas, the *too* giddy!) dance invites, or where the hum of conversation is hushed by the voice of some more or less gifted songster, or the too often dreary foolishness of private theatricals. Probably you will say, 'What *is* the man grumbling at? If he does not like it, why does he not stay away?' That is it, my hasty reader—I *cannot*. I have an aunt; she is an invalid; she has two daughters—two *lovely* daughters; they have just come out; and I, John de la Roche Brown—I, who shun the fair sex, even in their ordinary garb, as I would shun the 'shining crocodile,' and who tremble and am reduced to mumbling speechlessness before Diana armed in all the panoply of her evening adornments—I am forced by a spiteful Fate to leave the congenial society of my book and my cigar, am made to endue myself in a garb which renders me pitifully ridiculous even in my own sight, and am led away an unwilling victim to the sacrificial altar of society.

One fell and dreadful day (mark it, O Time, with the blackest letter in thy calendar), I was invited by my cousins to esquire them to a dancing-party at South Kensington. I made feeble excuses; they were overruled; I appealed to my respected mother; alas, she thinks I only need bringing out to become an entertaining ornament to society.

'Nonsense, Jack!' said she;

'Lady Something or other' (I did not catch her ladyship's name) 'is a most desirable acquaintance for you. Millie and Kate *must* go, and you must take them; besides, if you always insist upon shutting yourself up in that smoky study of yours, you will become, like that man with the tub, you know, a regular Sardanapalus.'

She meant Diogenes, I suppose, for my lady mother is not so versed in the somewhat free and easy tales of the classics as some of the younger of her sex are nowadays.

'Then,' said Kate, 'O Jack! you know you *are* so good-natured, and it is *so* kind of you to go out with us; isn't it, Millie? You *must* come only this once; everybody will be there.'

Well, I gave in. What would you have me to do? Ugly as I am, I can't help seeing that Kate is a most pleasing person. I find it difficult to say 'No' to *any* one, and an impossibility in the case of this lovely cousin of mine.

At the hour when it is my habit to get into (so to speak) a not very elegant, but certainly most comfortable, smoking-coat, and with a pleasant but silent companion in the shape of some interesting book or other, to smoke a last cigar before turning in—at about eleven o'clock P.M., the rumbling of a carriage suddenly stopped, and the pealing of the house bell told me that I must hobble down-stairs as best I could in very tight and shiny boots, and go off with my two fair cousins (of whom I confess I am vilely afraid, in spite of our cousinhood) to a house which I had never entered before, with the certain knowledge that I should know no one in the room, and with a full determination to avoid such acquaintance at all costs.

Well, we arrived. There was the usual flood of light from the windows, the usual striped covered way and red carpeted footpath from the kerbstone to the front door, the usual not too complimentary crowd of onlooking ragamuffins ('Two Beauties and *one* Beast,' was what I heard *this* time), and the usual full-fed and enormous flunkeys.

Kate and Millicent are what are called 'fine girls,' and I am not sure that I did not catch the ghost of a grin upon the long lane of flunkey faces in the hall, as I stumbled along in my tight boots, with Kate on my right arm and Millicent on my left, and both of them talking to one another *over* my head, alas!

It always sends a nervous shudder through my frame to hear my name bawled out, as these irritating servers at Mammon's shrine seem to delight in bawling it, and my accustomed awkwardness was not lessened at hearing one red-faced white-wigged giant after another making a kind of unmusical catch of the words, 'Mister Dellyrosh Brown' (for so they pronounced my second Christian name, of which I am justly proud) 'and the Misses Spencer Penningham.'

At last we were in the ante-room, which evidently led into the ballroom, and a handsomely-dressed middle-aged lady was introduced to me as Lady Heaven-knows-what (I never *can* catch these hastily-muttered names). I mumbled out some feeble utterance or other about the weather to my hostess, to which, fortunately, no one seemed to pay any attention. In a second my cousins were surrounded by a crowd of admiring cavaliers of their acquaintance, each armed with one of those abominable torture-books, with a dangling pencil, yclept

programmes; and behold me, left to mine own devices, in the centre of a crowd of animated but, to me, unknown faces. Now, my cousin Kate is a very good-natured girl; she evidently feels that she ought to make me some return for dragging me out in this unconscionable way from my shy solitary life; and naturally supposing, from the eagerness with which the honour is sought by the gilded youth aforementioned, that to dance with her is one of the highest and sweetest happinesses which kindly Fortune can bestow upon mankind, she always insists upon dancing the first dance at any evening-party to which an unpropitious Fate compels us together, with me. She is a graceful girl; she has a wonderful ear for music, and dances, as people say, divinely, though I am not aware that such saltatorial performances are to form part of the bliss of the blessed. As I said before, I *cannot* dance; I never could summon up courage to hold her what *she* calls 'properly,' save the mark! which seems to mean, so to speak, tightly. 'Tis of no use, I cannot do it. I nervously hold her gingerly, and at arm's length; in point of fact, as if she were something unpleasant to the nasal organ and particularly brittle. I try to move round to the music; but somehow I do not go round with that regularity which I remark in others, and my terpsichorean efforts are, I am aware, all the time eyed with well-bred scorn by the onlookers, and regarded with extreme disfavour by those unfortunate individuals upon whose feet I stamp, whose dresses I rip and tear, and into whose sides my bony elbows penetrate. If, on the other hand, the dance should happen to be a square one, though there is nothing of the simplicity of the square in its painful and

intricate evolutions, I am even in a worse case; I become a grief to myself and an obloquy to the whole 'set' which has the misfortune to share in my eccentric performances. In spite of my most watchful notice of other couples, in spite of my lovely cousin's most careful instructions, I find myself placed in painful and even ridiculous positions. After wandering aimlessly about during the 'figure,' the music suddenly ceases, and I am discovered setting to partners vaguely in the midst of our quartet, or, after several confusing manœuvres, I come to myself in the midst of a 'set' totally distinct from my own, and whose component parts regard me with a contempt not unmingled with derision. In fact, there is no end to my misfortunes, and nothing but the most determined kindness on Kate's part could bear with the ridiculous absurdity of my performances. It is sad that so good a quality should be my bane. This time, however, I was more fortunate than I usually am; for we entered upon the scene whilst some Scotch folk were performing athletic feats in a dance called, I believe, a Caledonian; and, as every one seemed intent in gazing upon the agility and gracefulness of the dancers, I had time to survey my ground, and to prepare the way for a retreat, which indeed I effected before the Scottish dance was over.

The ballroom was a long oblong; and opposite to the end where the musicians were stationed there was a kind of alcove or bay-window, in which was placed one of those large circular ottomans which have a cushioned seat all round; and in the top of the lounge a receptacle, which is filled with foliage, plants, and drooping ferns. Now, could anything be more enticing to a man

of my retiring disposition? If I could only get *behind* that happy ottoman, behold me blissfully concealed, until the general move to supper should drag me from my resting-place. Fortune favoured me for once. By gradually working my way along the wall, I soon found myself at my wished-for goal, and, unobserved, I crept behind the convenient piece of furniture; there I lay *perdu* in the happy consciousness that, unless an evil spirit should move some enamoured couple to covet my retirement, I should be my own companion for just as long as I chose to lie concealed. Whether it was the (to me, at least) unaccustomed lateness of the hour, or whether it was the measured rhythm of the dance-music, I know not, but just as I was beginning to realise the pleasantness of my seclusion and the relief from the shyness which assails me in public, I felt a most decided sleepiness creeping over me. I resisted for some time, feeling how dreadful it would be to be discovered in hidden somnolence; but it was of no use, the drowsy god had gotten firm hold of me, and I was soon just as fast asleep as if I were between my customary sheets in my own bedroom at home.

I must have slept soundly for some time, but at last, suddenly and with a startled and chilly feeling, I awoke. Confused at first, I could not imagine where I was, or how my ordinary sleeping attire had become changed into the claw-hammer coat and other male habiliments of evening society. However, as I crept round the ottoman and, peering out from my corner, saw a wide stretch of white floorcloth, dimly lighted, before me, and marked the music-stands at the other end of the room, the dreadful truth burst in upon me: I, the most

nervous man in the whole world, was alone in a strange house; every one had gone home, the ball was over, and here was I left to grope my way to the door, sure to find it locked, and almost certain to stumble over something or other in my awkwardness. I should be taken for a burglar: already I felt the 'whish' of the poker, as it descended on my devoted head; already I heard the click of the revolver, which was to put an end to my miserable existence; in fact, there was no limit to the unpleasant probabilities that presented themselves to my half-awakened and startled faculties. However, it soon struck me that if it indeed were as I feared, the lights would be altogether out, and Kate and Millicent would scarcely have gone home without raising a hue and cry after me; moreover, a kind of conversational hum, which seemed to float up from the lower floor, soon made itself to be heard, and told me a truth almost as bad to me as my first-started surmise. They had all gone down to supper! Now, in my perturbation at the prospect of going to this abominable dancing-party, I had been unable to attack my dinner with my usually robust appetite. I was therefore ravenously hungry; if it had not been for this, I should have stayed where I was, and trusted to Fortune to give me an opportunity to emerge from my stronghold in the throng and noise of the after-supper dancing. And it is to this abominable and insatiable appetite of mine that I must put down all the misfortunes which I am now going on to relate.

Moved by a desire to eat and drink at whatever cost to my constitutional modesty, and agonised at the fear lest the supper should be over and the *débris* thereof

cleared away before I could obtain what I began to want with an increasing craving, it struck me that it would be quite possible for me to glide into the supper-room amongst the servants, who would be constantly going in and coming out; and I imagined that I could take up a modest position in some obscure corner, and there satisfy those cravings about the region of the epigastrium which were making themselves to be so unpleasantly felt. In pursuit of my plan and with much caution I walked along on the tips of my toes to the wide landing outside the ballroom and anteroom. It was empty. Emboldened at this happy chance, and hearing the sound of clattering knives and forks and plates, and the noise of many people talking and laughing, I looked over the balustrade, and through the opened door of the supper-room I caught a glimpse of the well-spread table and of some of the happy folk around it. Maddened at this blissful vision, and seeing a train of serving-men coming from the back of the house with dishes bearing another course, I slipped quietly down the stairs, and, unobserved in the hurry, soon found myself close to them. *Now* was my opportunity, and I was just going to seize it, when a fiend in human shape, a waiter in evening dress, pushed a huge dish of strawberries into my hands, saying in that utterly unpronounceable cockney twang, 'Now then, Sawney' (my mother calls my hair 'auburn'), 'look alive! Take these yere strawberries round; and mind you don't spill 'em.'

Not a minute's time was given me for expostulation or explanation; other waiters were pushing on behind; and before I could gather my scattered wits I found myself in the brilliantly lighted

supper-room among the hired waiters, and with an enormous dish of fruit in my hands. What was I to do? I had not a moment to decide, the horror of being seen in such a too ridiculous position terrified me; and I found myself handing round the fruit, with a waiter following me with cream and sugar. Imagine the *awful* state of my mind when I approached my cousins. They were close together, separated only by the partner of one of them. I could see, as I drew near, that they were talking vivaciously; it was their turn next. The gentleman beside Kate said, 'No, thanks.' Bless him! Kate refused without looking up. Millicent allowed her friend to place some strawberries on her plate, talking eagerly all the time; and with a sigh of infinite relief, I passed on my strange round unrecognised. Luckily, this was the end of the supper, and in a few minutes the lady of the house rose, and passed out, followed by all the other ladies. Hidden behind my taller *confrères*, I was not seen by either of my two fair relatives, and I began to breathe again. Some of the folk *must* have noticed me as I passed round the table with those fatal strawberries, and I felt I had cast in my lot with the servants, and must wait a convenient opportunity to escape from my curious predicament. Whether it was that the waiters were a mixed lot hurriedly got together (there were a good many of them, and it was the very height of the season), or whether, as seemed to be the case, they were not all known to the head man—whatever may have been the reason, my presence among them seemed to cause no surprise; no questions were asked me; and not knowing what else to do, I followed them, or rather

went with them, to the kitchen part of the mansion, leaving one or two in the supper-room to attend on the gentlemen who remained there.

'Now it's *our* turn to get a blow-out,' said a long and cadaverous waiter to me, as we went down the stairs side by side. 'I dunno 'ow *you* feels, but the sight of them swells a-bustin' 'emselves, and the smell of the vittles, 'as made me that 'ungry as I could eat the 'ind leg of a dog raw.'

I quite agreed with my gentleman, and, painful as my position was, I felt somewhat cheered at the prospect of food which his words opened out to me. Speaking to one of the many maids who were scurrying about,

'Now then, Mary,' said he, 'where's our shop, for we ain't got no time ter spare?'

'This way, Mr. Mugford,' said she.

And following the girl, we (with our brothers of the limp white choker) soon found ourselves seated at a long table, amply furnished with a refection of a substantial and satisfying nature. I began to forget my embarrassment in the novelty of the situation, and quickly seized upon the opportunity to appease my appetite. For some minutes very few words were spoken, the noise of the knives and forks, and such observations as 'And hover a slice or two o' that beef, Jim;' 'This yer weal-an'-am pie 's proper;' 'Chuck us over the bread, Bill;' 'Heasy with the hale, 'Arry,' told a tale of hunger which was being rapidly laid.

'Well,' at length said my long friend, leaning back in his chair, heaving a sigh of repletion, and casually picking his teeth with a fork, 'hall I can say is, I done myself werry well, and I 'ope as

you 'ave too, young man. I only wish I 'ad a go in like this hevery day; but life ain't all beer and skittles, as the sayin' is. Been long at this trade? I ain't sure if I've seed your face afore.'

'No,' said I, 'this is the first job I ever had of the kind.'

'Well,' said he, 'yer might do wuss, though the hours is trying to the 'elth.'

Here ensued a great scraping of chairs, accompanied by last pulls at the tumblers, and a general wiping of mouths. I was just beginning again to wonder how on earth I should get out of this unpleasant predicament, when my neighbour, who seemed to be a kind of chief amongst them, gave directions to his band as follows:

'Now, gents, pleasure fust an' business arter, is my motter. Cleanin' up is the next game. Four on yer takes the plates, four on yer takes the glass, and me and my two mates there takes the silver. Jim, you there, and 'Enery look arter the knives; and look 'ere, all on yer, let each one keep 'isself to 'isself, and let's 'ave no larks with the hother sect; and just remember, 'im what breaks 'as got ter pay. The rest on yer look arter the refreshment-room; and I say, Bill, you and this yere young man' (meaning me) 'can give the gents their 'ats an' coats; for I know you're a honest chap, and won't come any games over the tips, which is common property, and must be divided as sich.'

I suppose it was the comparative freshness of my attire which caused the chief, in his 'speech before going into action,' to bestow on me the honourable post of deputy hat-dispenser; for, to say the truth, the raiment of my fellow-waiters was of a seedy, not to say greasy, order, and strongly

suggestive of the secondhand-clothes shop. I could not very well effect my escape *now*, for I was too shy to make any explanations to the long one; besides, my companions would have been not a little astonished to see a 'mate' in the novel guise of a 'swell.' I feared, too, lest some of the supper-party should have noticed my marked features when I was waiting at table, and might, therefore, recognise the waiter in the guest. Hemmed in thus on both sides, I despondently followed my associate into a small room off the hall, where, on the tables and chairs and on the floor, were piled up heaps of hats, topcoats and mufflers, each heap with its white ticket attached to it.

'I s'pose you know what you've got ter do, matey?' said my companion.

'No,' said I, 'I can't say I do.'

'Well, look yere,' said he. 'I stands 'ere at the bar, and takes the tickets from the gents and calls out the numbers to you; you finds the numbers on the 'eaps, and 'ands the toppers an' ceterer to me, and I gives 'em to the gents. They're all in horder, for I took 'em myself, and yer won't 'ave no trouble.'

Just then the exodus began, and 'Here, waiter, No. 21; look sharp. *Not* that; the *brown* coat.' 'All right; this is mine.' (A clink of silver.) 'Thank'ee, sir!' from my friend. 'Forty-two, I tell

you' (to me); 'can't you find it? Clumsy idiot' (under his breath); 'do be quick, don't keep me waiting here all night!' 'Got a light, waiter? Tha-a-anks;' and so forth. I was trying, in a confused sort of way, in the midst of this hubbub, to think how I should get out of it all, when I caught sight of my top-gear, with its appropriate ticket pinned on it, in a convenient corner. Just then I fancied I distinguished my cousin Kate's voice, and soon I caught the words, unmistakably *hers*: 'Where on earth *can* Jack have hidden himself, Millie! it is *too* bad of him.' At the same moment a hoarse cry from outside struck my ear: 'Mrs. Penningham's carriage stops the way! Mrs. Penningham's carriage!'

Desperately I snatched up my hat and coat; and before my fellow-dispenser, in his utter astonishment, had time to cry out 'Stop thief!' I was over the bar, down the steps in a trice, and seated in the farthest corner of my aunt's carriage, followed by my bewildered cousins and the laughter both of the flunkies and the retreating guests. I need scarcely add, after this woful experience and after the torture of those horrible hours, that my cousins have had to find some other escort, and society has lost an ornament (!) in the person of Mr. John de la Roche Brown.

GEORGE LAMBERT.

IN THE HAND OF THE SEA.

THE exiled Duke of philosophic mind who found sermons in the stones of the Forest of Arden might find them now in stones and bricks that have been thrown into form by human hands and named Hastings and St. Leonards. For, with a solitary exception that holds out seaward its sad protesting hand, these towns beat with one heart and are two only in name. The fairyland of Boppep, the highborn Marina gliding with stately condescension into a line of comfortable shops and lodging-houses, the picturesque ancestral houses that once were fashionable—all combine to give their smiling frontage to the sea, and welcome the homeward-bound traveller along the happy shore. After your letters have been for some time directed to so-and-so place, St. Leonards, a friend will very probably inform you that strictly speaking that place is in Hastings, but it is of no consequence. Everything declares that it is of no consequence. There is an arch that stands with mild reproach assertive of boundary rights, but no one thinks of attending to it; and the guide-book goes so far as to say that it ought to be pulled down! Some people differ from the guide-book, and think that even a useless arch has its charm, and should be respected because of the heavens and the lesson that their peerless dome has taught the human intellect.

The attractions offered by the two wings of the towns are not unequally balanced. On the west there is the view of Beachy Head and ruddy sunset seas; and behold

there the fine and costly ocean-wall, the serene quiet consequent on highborn Marina names, private bath-chairs with attendant footmen, and absence of vehicles for hire! Leaning this side of the Siamese towns, and walking north-eastward, you find yourself among surroundings that caused Mark Twain much dejection in his tramps. There are, indeed, 'sights and objects of interest' on all sides, from the spot where Harold fell to the grave where lies Old Humphrey; from some of Nature's loveliest scenes to that mysterious display of art the Caves, by fancy dedicated to the use of early Christians and midnight smugglers. The old entrance to the caves is lost to us; we have only the aperture caused by the leg of the gardener who discovered them, and an opening which leads through a soda-water grotto into undulating sand passages between much-carved walls. On, on you stumble in gloom streaked by the flare of candles held by a boy to whom it is felt you must attach yourself or die, lost in the subterranean labyrinth; and visitors grow weirdly cheerful as they plunge on half sand-bound—are impelled to excess of merriment by the grim quietude of the place. Yet these caves are only rough-hewn sand-works cut out a few feet below ground; works that might lead an ant visiting them to conclude people had at last gone to him for example. 'The result is, I admit, a most singular one,' says the ant, putting up his eyeglass critically.

Turning to the left on leaving

the caves, we see below the old fishing town of Hastings, a place of great interest and full of individuality; a place forming the exception above alluded to, a jarring note in the harmony of the united towns. There below us lies the forest of mast and rigging; the fishing vessels are drawn up together on the beach, and the men are mending nets or making new ones, repairing sailcloth, or dipping it in the red-brown dye. There is no boat out on the quiet sea to-day, nor crossing the sun's broad glittering path; for the toilers are resting after foul weather, in which much damage has been done, much treasure lost. The foam curls lovingly on the beach now, and there is an armistice between ocean and land; but not long ago the surf ran strong on the town, and tore down the alight high-built net-houses, and destroyed and swept off the store of nets and dried fish laid by in them. The line of *débris* is yet lying on the shingle, and the grave faces of the men and women denote the danger and insecurity of their situation. 'Such weather

we have had,' they seem to say, 'such awful scenes upon our broken shore that lies in the hand of the changeful sea. We cannot smile like you of the West Cliff; we can but watch and wait.'

They need indeed a strong sea-wall to check the encroachments of the white-lipped sea, and that wall would 'cost a fortune.' A fortune *has* been spent upon the sea-wall at the Marina end of the place, and this defence increases the peril of the lowly village, and bringing the current with more force upon it. What makes it very strange that the gallant little place should be left to itself and the storm is the fact that the fishery brings in 40,000*l.* to the towns. There is a patient watchful look about the gaunt line of shipping and time-worn flag-staff, as though, seconding their russet-shirted masters, they gave this refrain to the wind: 'Yes, yes, we wait and watch and hope; but if another winter's storms still find us undefended, we'll cease our watching and leave for ever this unkind shore, where we have lived and worked so long in vain.'

K. GILES.

THE CHANNEL TUNNEL.

(With an Illustration.)

O WOODEN walls of England, we loved you in old days,
And many an abler pen than mine has sung your deathless
praise ;

You breasted all the billows, and when manned by sailors bold,
You vanquished the Armada in historic days of old.

What though compared with other folk our army might be
weak,

We trusted to our sailors and the fateful silver streak ;
Britannia rules the waves, we know, but what gain can there be,
If once we join ourselves to France and tunnel 'neath the sea ?

A good friend France, who doubts it ? since she joined us in
the fight

That saw the Russian hordes go back on Balaklava's height ;
And Germany will never dare advance the serried line
'Gainst us, since she is bound to keep the watch upon the
Rhine :

So we can rest, too tranquilly mayhap ; for what may chance,
If once we make a roadway clear for Germany and France ;
If once we raise our fortresses on English holt and lea,
And trust not to the stalwart ships that sweep the silver sea ?

Not ours the task to presage storm athwart the summer sky,
But there's an ancient proverb warns to keep our powder dry :
We hold the olive-branch of peace before a watching world,
Yet wot ye well behind it still the battle-flags are furled :
And they must be unrolled again, if once beneath the foam
We suffer any pathway made to mock our island home.
O, trust us, bitter is the weird that Englishmen must dree,
If once we let the tunnel break the bulwark of the sea !

H. SAVILE CLARKE.



THE SONG OF THE CHANNEL TUNNEL.

FIVE LESSONS FROM OLD SCHOOLMASTER NATURE.

BY WALTER THORNBURY.

LESSON I.

TEN years to build a house? The mushroom's roof
In one night rises,
And surprises
The shepherd lout ere crushed beneath his hoof.

LESSON II.

Years to work one room full of tapestry?
The rose's shoot
Has grown a foot
Since last night's rain. O Nature's majesty!

LESSON III.

Three years to fix on canvas a dead saint?
Careless to day
Through earth made way
The lily : dullard, learn from it to subtly paint.

LESSON IV.

Poor prodigal ! you toss your gold in showers away?
The autumn tree
As recklessly
Flings all its leaves ; but they return in May.

LESSON V.

Kind Nature keeps for all of us a gentle school.
Even the wise
Through it may rise
Still wiser. Sorrow and death alone can teach the fool.

IN THE VALLEY OF RASSELAS.

THE speculative contractor, the enterprising engineer, and the opulent utilitarian of Great George-street, Westminster, S.W., do not have it quite their own way after all. It will not be Mr. John Ruskin and the Transcendentalists alone who will hear, with a feeling of satisfaction, that the projected line of railway from Derby to Ashbourne and Dove Dale, for which parliamentary powers had been sought, has been abandoned because of lack of support from the landowners, and that the pass of the Dove 'through the world's divinest dale' has escaped the unclean invasion of a noisy civilisation. This is surely cause for gratitude; for Dove Dale, with its wild romance of scenic charm, and the literary associations that lend to its green and rocky beauty an added poetry, is one of the few magical spots left uncontaminated in this once fair England of ours. 'That whistle,' against which the irate recluse of Rydal Mount called upon the 'mountains, vales, and floods' to 'share the passion of a just disdain,' when the screeching steel startled the peaceful heart of English Lakeland, would sound like a hideous sacrilege amid the sylvan solitude of Dove Dale, where the only sound is the cadence of the current, the plash of the trout, the voice of wild birds, and the stir of the softened wind in the tremulous trees. Dove Dale, at any rate, is for the present spared from the hand of the despoiler—a consolation which will perhaps the better enable us to bear the in-

dignity of the abominable proposals to send the iron horse spouting sulphur and smoke over the virgin beauty of the New Forest, up the exquisite glen at Derwentwater, and through the unexplored stretches of Charnwood Forest. Why a railway to Dove Dale should have ever been proposed is a conundrum as vexatious as that mentioned in one of Mr. William Black's stories, which was so good that the man who made it, after endeavouring in vain for two years and a half to find out what it meant, gave it up and cut his throat in sorrowing despair. Ashbourne is only a matter of three or four miles' pleasant stroll from Thorpe Cloud, which sentinels, with austere guard, the entrance to Dove Dale; and Ashbourne, as Bradshaw's recondite *Guide* will inform you, has a railway-station in direct communication with the iron-roads of the Midland, the London and North-Western, the Great Northern, and the North Staffordshire Companies. Dove Dale therefore is already almost within the sound of 'that whistle.' A railway direct to the portals of such a 'beauty spot' would serve no purpose. It would be fed by no collieries, by no large towns, by no arteries of commerce. Perhaps it was because of these considerations that the landowners did not embrace the railway scheme that would have furnished the magical Valley of Rasselas with signal-boxes, engine-sheds, and shunting sidings. Otherwise pelf, sooner than poetry, might

have influenced their attitude. Anyhow, I hope the authors of the abandoned project, whoever they may be, will come, like it, to a speedy and desirable end.

Perhaps, on subsequent reflection on the turpitude of this reckless wish, I shall feel constrained to moderate its tone. At present such a concession is not to be thought of. For at this instant the 'Princess Dove' is coquetting with me, and confiding to me her secrets. I am seated by her side, while the sun is shining on her fair and beautiful face. Flowers repose on her bosom, and she sings with such eloquent expression that the trees hang over to listen to every meaning of her voice, while the fortress-like rocks seem softened by the sound. I have been keeping company with 'Princess Dove' these several days past, and she has grown up from a petulant infant to this sheeny Princess as I have walked by her side. I met her first running away in fear from the cavern-home of her father, King Axe Edge, near Buxton; and I have followed her wanderings by dell and meadow until she gained confidence, and grew in beauty; prattling at first, then chattering, then singing, as the sun caught the shimmer of her white wing. 'Princess Dove'!—that was Charles Cotton's apostrophe. He calls 'fair Dove' his 'beloved nymph,' and was never so happy as when he could make young again the heart of Izaak Walton by bringing the old angler down into the Peak to share his love of the Dove. They fished in tranquillity through all the stormy troubles of the Civil War, more interested in perch than Puritans, and more attracted by roach than Royalists. This afternoon I visited their fishing-house in one of the upper reaches of the Dale at Beresford,

where Izaak Walton was Cotton's guest till the age of eighty-three. It is a little square building of gray stone, built on a peninsula of the Dove. Trees protect it; the river reflects it. The inscription, *Piscatoribus Sacrum*, 1674, belongs to the freemasonry of fishermen. Underneath this dedication the initials of Cotton and Walton are intertwined in a monogram. In this little fishing sanctum the good old man discoursed to his 'son Charles' of the pleasures of simple content and the delights of country life. After Charles had quaintly described this fishing-house, Izaak added this postscript: 'Some part of the fish-house has been described; the pleasantness of the river, mountains, and meadows cannot, unless Sir Philip Sydney were again alive to do it.' Dove Dale may possibly have given Sir Philip his idea of *Arcadia*, even as it suggested to Doctor Johnson *The Valley of Rasselas*. I wander down the Dale, and pause to creep in the sheltered cave where Cotton, in the latter part of his life, much involved in debt, escaped from duns and bailiffs. There is a flat shelf of rock, dry and secure, in the cave. Upon this the impecunious poet was wont to stretch a pallet of straw, and have for company Horace, Catullus, Virgil, Corneille, and Montaigne; meanwhile writing:

'Lord, would men let me alone,
What an over-happy one
Should I think myself to be!
Might I, in this desert place,
Which most men in discourse disgrace,
Live but undisturbed and free!
Here, in this despised recess,
Would I, maugre winter's cold
And the summer's worst excess,
Try to live out to sixty full years old!
And all the while,
Without an envious eye,
Or any thriving under Fortune's smile,
Contented live, and then—contented die.'

Did the waters of the Dove

possess no poetical witchery of their own, did not white tors repeat their pinnacles in crystal water, and loving greenery bend down to kiss each ripple, they would possess a charm from their association with genius. It is wonderful how scenery is influenced by the interest of immortal lives. Imagine Sinai without the Law-giver; Jerusalem without the memory of the Man of Sorrows; Greece with no Homer; Rome with no Horace; Iona without Columba; Mull and Morven without Ossian; the Avon bereft of Shakespeare; the Doon devoid of the memory of Burns; the Tweed without Sir Walter Scott; the Ouse without Bunyan and Cowper; the Trent without Kirke White and Byron; the Sheffield Don without Ebenezer Elliott; the Lake Country without Wordsworth and Wilson, Coleridge and De Quincey, Arnold and Southey; Chelsea without Carlyle; Antwerp without Rubens. Landscape is linked with lives. As Longfellow, in one of his prose passages, says, 'Even scenes unlovely in themselves become clothed in beauty when illuminated by the imagination, as faces in themselves become so by the expression of thought and feeling.' Genius enriches scenery with a human interest, rendering it radiant with

'The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration and the poet's dream.'

I sit by the feet of the 'Princess Dove' this May morning, as the breeze brings her a *billet-doux* of scent from the hawthorns, and the flowers open out their wonders, and the birds serenade her from green branches that embroider towering rocks, and all around are the idyllic influences of the spring-time. And I apply this law of association between

scenery and genius to this Derbyshire dale. The banks of the Dove suddenly become crowded with famous figures, and the valley is consecrated by genius into a shrine.

Dr. Johnson called Dove Dale the 'happy valley' of his *Rasselas*, and it must have been a grateful experience for him to leave the dirt and din of Fleet-street to spend hospitable hours with Dr. Taylor of Ashbourne, amid the wild beauty of the Dove Dale country. Next to Boswell, Taylor was Johnson's greatest familiar. Schoolfellows at Lichfield, they were college-companions at Oxford, and friends for life. Johnson had such implicit regard for the character of the Ashbourne worthy that, when his wife died, he sent for him to console his shadowed life with prayer; and, when the great philosopher found himself about to face the dark flood, it was to the simple parson of the Peak he applied for that peace which the world cannot give. Taylor became Prebendary of Westminster. He lived to read the funeral service in the historic Abbey over all that was mortal of his literary friend. If Johnson had been the survivor, his declining days would have been made placid by Taylor's estate. And a very comfortable estate it must have been. Boswell gives us a striking pen-and-ink picture of the Ashbourne divine:

'There came for us an equipage properly suited for a wealthy beneficed clergyman—Dr. Taylor's large roomy postchaise, drawn by four stout horses, and driven by two steady jolly postillions, which conveyed us to Ashbourne, where his house, garden, table, in short, everything was good, no scantiness appearing; and his size, figure, countenance, and manner were those of

a hearty English squire with the parson superinduced ; and I took particular notice of his upper servant, Mr. Peters, a decent good man, in purple clothes and large white wig, like the butler or major-domo of a bishop. Dr. Johnson and Dr. Taylor met with great cordiality.'

There are no more pleasant passages in Boswell's biography than where he reproduces the conversations between Johnson and his Ashbourne friend. The two doctors, so widely divergent in disposition, walked along the banks of the Dove together, as much a Pylades and Orestes, a Damon and Pythias, as were Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton before them. The eye of the mind can see the little party. Taylor, rubicund of face, rotund of form, a compromise between the fox-hunter and the theologian ; Johnson, with the big brown coat with the brass buttons, and the seared, kind, ugly, wonderful face, shadowed by a wig full of strange phrenological protuberances ; Langley, the trenchant disputant, talking to Gilpin the tourist ; Boswell, spaniel-like in obedient attendance. Johnson, to whom ordinary scenery carried no captivation, and to whom the conventional country-side appealed so little as to provoke the dogmatic remark, 'Sir, one green field is like another green field ; let us take a walk down Fleet-street,' stands with his eyes arrested in admiration at the picturesque 'straits' in Dove Dale, saying, 'I should like to build an arch from rock to rock over the stream, with a summer-house upon it.' Ilam, a lower reach of the Dale, he thus describes : 'Ilam has grandeur tempered with softness ; the walker congratulates his own arrival at the place, and is grieved

to think he must ever leave it. As he looks up to the rocks, his thoughts are elevated ; as he turns his eyes on the valley, he is composed and soothed. . . . Ilam is the fit abode of pastoral virtue, and might properly diffuse its shades over nymphs and swains.' Boswell remarks : 'He that has seen Dove Dale has no need to visit the Highlands.' The comparison is as far-fetched as Lord Byron's remark that 'There are prospects in Derbyshire as noble as in Greece or Switzerland.' If Dove Dale were Scotland, or Greece, or Switzerland, it would cease to be Dove Dale. Pleasant, however, are the pictorial touches Boswell gives us of that odd, old-world Ashbourne, the threshold to Dove Dale, and the door that opens many avenues of delightful scenery. Ashbourne is little changed from the time when Johnson and Taylor held friendly controversy together in the roomy hospitable house beside the church. The quaint town wears the dress of last century. The tide of progress has left it almost untouched. There are the same old gabled houses, the same shadowy nooks and corners, the same suggestions of the green country mixed up with the filmy smoke of the steep irregular streets, the same picturesque diversity of architecture, the same shimmer of brightly running water. The Green Man hostel, about whose mistress—'a mighty civil gentlewoman'—Boswell is so enthusiastically eulogistic, is unaltered. The quaint old sign still swings into the middle of the street.

The church at Ashbourne recalls another of the 'shining great ones' I see in imagination walking by Dove side. Tom Moore lived at Mayfield Cottage, Hanging Bridge. From the banks of the Dove he wrote many of his

'Letters' to Byron. Here, too, he composed *Lalla Rookh*, holding 'the gorgeous East in fee' with its blaze of Oriental colour and its sun-fed splendour, amid the wild rocks and moors of the Peak of Derbyshire. By the banks of the Dove he penned a more familiar poem than *Lalla Rookh*.

The bells which ring out to the wild sky from Ashbourne steeple are 'Those Evening Bells' which Moore swung into a melody more musical than their own. You know those familiar tender lines, reader? In the last verse he refers to Dove Dale:

'And so 'twill be when I am gone,
That tuneful peal will still ring on;
While other bards shall walk these dells,
And sing your praise, sweet evening
bells.'

'Those Evening Bells' echo the chime of the Ashbourne belfry, and their sweet cadence will be heard when the metal throats high up in the hoary old Derbyshire tower have lost their music even as have the Flemish bells cast by the famous moulder, Van der Gheydn, of Loudain. This old church at Ashbourne seems to be the shrine of tender memories. In the chancel a great sculptor has thrown his soul into what is the music of marble. It is worth while making a pilgrimage to the Peak to read Banks' monument to the memory of Penelope Boothby. She was the only child of Sir Brooke Boothby. Sir Joshua Reynolds painted the portrait of this sweet girl as she appeared in all the glow and grace of health. One of the illustrated papers has reproduced this canvas, and made the innocent little face familiar in every home. The relentless 'Reaper,' of whom Longfellow sings, took the choice flower away before it had passed from bud to bloom. It is a child of only six years whose fragile form Banks

has sculptured. She rests upon a mattress of marble that seems as soft and white in its texture as the daintiest down. The fretful fevered arms are drawn up in sharp pain near the head, which reposes on a pillow. The naked feet are folded over each other. The face wears an ineffable expression. It is enchanting in its exquisite tenderness. The body is in pain, but the soul, symbolised in the face, is with the angels. The details of the sculptor's work are a revelation of art. The drapery, with the graceful sash of the frock, is a study. Both in conception and execution the work is wonderful. Sir Francis Chantrey stole into the church to study this dream of art. It gave him the inspiration for his master group, 'The Sleeping Children' in Lichfield Cathedral, which he designed in the aforementioned Ashbourne hostel. There is an aching pathos in the inscriptions on Penelope's tomb, that vainly endeavour to translate into language the father's feelings over the death of the child of his heart. These inscriptions are in English, Latin, French, and Italian. The English one reads: 'She was in form and intellect most exquisite. The unfortunate parents ventured their all on this frail bark, and the wreck was total.' Speaking of Sir Francis Chantrey, his *chef-d'œuvre*, in the opinion of many people, is to be seen at the pretty little church at Ilam in the 'Valley of Rasselas.' It represents the venerable David Pike Watts on his death-bed, giving his last benediction to a sorrowing family group.

I sit and smoke and ponder by the Dove. She is chattering to me all the time. More people of the past wander down the Dale. I raise my hat to Congreve; he

is on his way to his friend Mr. Port's house at Ilam, where, in a rocky recess 'far from the maddening crowd's ignoble strife,' he wrote more than one of his best comedies. Politicians as well as poets come this way. The 'Derby Dilly' brought Canning to visit the Boothbys yesterday. You remember his political squib beginning :

'So down thy slope, romantic Ashbourne,
e'en glides
The Derby Dilly, carrying six *insides*.'

And now, gathering flowers, who is that benevolent-looking old gentleman talking to a little girl with tangled hair and naked feet? It is William Wordsworth with his child-friend Lucy.

'She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone,
Half hidden from the eye;
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and O,
The difference to me!

And now, who are these coming this way, I wonder? One is communing with himself, and scattering, seemingly, seeds on the slopes of the cliffs and on the banks of the voiceful river, as he cherishes his philosophic dreams. The other is immersed in a book as he saunters by his comrade's side, occasionally looking up at rock and river. The one has a French-looking face. His gait, his manner, his dress, are strange. The other might be taken for a Scotch divine. The repose on his thoughtful face is in strong contrast to the shifting, restless, piercing eyes of his friend. The two are Jean Jacques Rousseau and David Hume. Rousseau lived at Wootton Hall hard

by. It was there he parted with his best friend, David Hume, whom he miserably misjudged. 'The Apostle of Affliction' came to Wootton Hall in mid-March. The snow whitened the Derbyshire uplands. The wild wind shrieked down the dale; it sobbed over the sullen outline of the moorlands. The Peak was a picture of bleakness; but we find Rousseau writing: 'It has been freezing ever since I came here; it has snowed incessantly; the wind cuts the face. In spite of all this I would rather live in a hole of one of the rabbits of this warren than in the finest room in London.' In the Dove Dale country Rousseau began to write his *Confessions*, the most introspective biography the world has ever seen. By the banks of the Dove he wandered, planting rare plants and flowers (some of which still keep his memory green); for he was a born botanist, and the wild profusion of green beauty in Dove Dale gladdened his heart. The tors reminded him of his Jura peaks. He escaped from the world. The people of the Peak regarded him as an exiled prince. He could not speak English. The villagers were ignorant of French. Thérèse interpreted his wants by signs. And so the refugee communed with the heart of Nature free from intrusion.

But the dominating genii of Dove Dale are Izaak Walton and his 'dear son,' Charles Cotton. Their invisible presence haunts and hallows the deep and devious valley which, with the declining sunlight making the glassy pools look like so many rich stained-glass cathedral windows, I reluctantly leave.

'Isaak, still thou angliest near me,
By the green banks of thy Dove;
Still thy gentle ghost may hear me
Breathe thy reverence and love.

O my kindly old piscator,
See'st thou not these waters clear?
Time, thou changeling, Time, thou traitor,
Give him back—his home was here!

Time, which has taken so many
of the great, the gentle, and the
good from the banks of this wind-
ing singing river, reflecting tor
and tree as in a mirror, has, hap-
pily, written no wrinkles on
Dove's fair brow. She is as

young and beautiful to-day as
when 'Piscator' of old pledged
his friend in a flagon of the best
Derbyshire ale, saying: 'And
now, sir, my service to you, a
good health to the honest gentle-
man you know of, and you are
welcome into the Peak.' Which
service and toast I respectfully
indorse in your favour, my city
reader.

EDWARD BRADBURY.

GRASS AND ROSES.

From the 'Gulistan' of Saadi.

[Saadi-Mualih-ud-din Saadi of Shiraz, the Persian poet, who, next to Hafiz, enjoys the greatest reputation, was born about 1178, and died in 1275. His *Gulistan*, or 'Rose Garden,' is a collection of moral stories in prose and verse.]

I LOOKED where the roses were blooming,
They stood among grasses and weeds;
I said, 'Where such beauties are growing,
Why suffer these paltry weeds?'

Weeping, the poor things faltered:
'We have neither beauty nor bloom;
We are grass in the roses' garden,
But the Master gives us room.

'Slaves of a generous Master
Born from a world above,
We come to this place in His wisdom,
We stay to this hour from His love.

'We have fed His humblest creatures,
We have served Him truly and long;
He gave no grace to our features,
We have neither colour nor song.

'Yet He who has made the flowers
Placed us on the self-same sod;
He knows our reason for being,—
We are grass in the Garden of God.'

HOW MY WIFE WENT TO MARGATE.

I HAVE been married to the dear creature four years, and my first-sight appreciation of her has but been enhanced by the contiguity. Her patent attractions of ethereal blue eyes, her aureole of golden hair, and her form of a hama-dryad, I have found to be the least of her charms. Bewitching features of character, but dimly suspected by me when I led to the altar the blushing Lucy—Lucy Briggs was her name till I changed it to Wiggins—have in these four years developed and blossomed forth; vistas of rapture, then unopened, now grow wider and wider each month of my married life; and, in short, No. 11 Stockcherry-terrace, Highgate, is a bower of bliss.

Two cherubs, a boy and a girl, Potty (*i.e.* Philpot, after his uncle in the Procrastination Office) and Totty, promise to transmit to posterity the qualities I have faintly indicated above. I speak, of course, of *her* virtues only. It behoves me to keep a dry pen with regard to myself, though my friends persist in declaring me—especially after supper at my house—to be a decent sort of fellow. I generally go ‘home to tea’ from my business of a merchant in oleaginous products, and there is no man, I may confidently say, who, both literally and metaphorically, pitches more into the muffins than I do.

The houses in Stockcherry-terrace have each a small front garden and a larger back garden. As regards geologic formation, no doubt our gardens are like the

rest. On investigation it is found that in all suburban gardens there is underneath two inches of mould (that at one shilling and a pint of beer the barrow-load) an alluvial deposit of cinders, after which you come upon the pleistocene formation of brickbats, and, probing deeper still, the pleiocene mud. But coming to the surface, there are no gardens in the terrace which can vie with ours in horticultural excellence. They are, in the summer season, a perfect Eden. Our tree—yes, we have a tree—is a splendid specimen of what our maid Anne calls the ‘black popular,’ evidently confusing it somehow with the Christy Minstrels. Our lawn is as smoothshaven as the amateur theatrical gentleman next door; our geraniums furnish me with ‘button-holes’ which are the envy of the whole City tram; and for aromatic pain, no one else’s carnations are ‘in it’ with ours.

Then I have a greenhouse four feet square. I have actually produced there an orange, which, though it cost me 1*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* in medical attendance for Potty, was an undoubted specimen of the fruit. And my wife, my Lucy, perfect on all sides of her character, not only hoes and rakes (occasionally in the wrong place, but that I forgive), but she has her own pet interests as well. Now it is an aquarium, which, though it leaks over the drawing-room carpet, is painted a most beautiful green. A little while ago she had a splendid Persian cat, and even a tortoise, whose

mission in life appeared to be to eat up my early lettuces and onions. But I forgave her that too, as I would anything.

But to my tale. The pleasant June weather had come, and our gardens were radiant with flowers. The evenings were deliciously long, and I could sit under the 'popular' with a pipe, and watch Lucy knit till quite late. The amateur gentleman could throw up his back-parlour window, and treat us to selections from the 'strictly legitimate,' while the academy for young ladies on the other side could open its window also, and practise for our benefit the most touching of scales. But, alas! there was a serpent in the Eden, an addled egg in the nest, a flat string in the angelic harp, a bad shilling in the change, a ghost at the banquet, fusel-oil in the whisky. All householders will feel for us when I say that we were suddenly beset by an attack of 'drains.'

Yes, drains. It was no use attempting to disguise it. Drains. It could not be that peculiarly high-flavoured cheese which had been sent as a great favour by a country aunt, for the odour persisted long after I had buried the cheese in the back garden. Nor was it an escape from a gaspipe; for in summer our meter was always turned off, which precaution, however, never prevented it from registering all the same. At one time we thought it must be the water in the patent filter; but though the product of that machine was much worse to taste than the original fluid, yet the aromatic qualities proved to be the same in both cases. No, none of these things was it, or anything else we could think of, except the drains.

Of course we were much disturbed. Jumping to the worst

conclusion, poor Lucy saw in imagination her helpless infants prostrate with diphtheria, or pleuropneumonia, or elephantiasis, or something equally shocking; she, I believe, was to acquire a galloping consumption for her own share; whereas I was to be satisfied with rheumatic fever, accompanied by softening of the brain. I tranquillised her as far as I could, but at best the case was serious. Day by day the obnoxious intruder became more and more pronounced and persistent, penetrating from the basement to the parlour above, seeming to thicken like the smoke that came out of the fisherman's jar, till we almost expected to see the genii.

'We shall all be burnt in our beds!' ejaculated Lucy, rendered pardonably illogical by her fears, poor girl.

'I must see the landlord,' I replied, with the determination of the Briton who has made up his mind to a desperate course of action.

Yes, it needs some resolution to 'see your landlord,' as householders are well aware, for an interview nearly always means a row. Our landlord, Mr. Pulton, is a model landlord, from the landlord's point of view. Originally a bricklayer, he has risen by industry, the perusal of Mr. Smiles's *Self Help*, and an invention of his own for making mortar without lime out of road scrapings, to the position of a proprietor. He is what is delusively known as a 'practical man.' He has a happy way with tenants that I can never cease admiring. If your top cistern leaked, and the water ran over your best furniture, when sent for to see it he would prove to you in two minutes that the cistern when put up was as perfect a cistern as ever was provided; that the framework was the best

two-inch sawed, planed, rabbited, morticed, tennoned, creosoted, and otherwise highly favoured oak; that the lead was the best-best Derbyshire double-milled steam-hammered flawless lead; that *his* cisterns never leaked under twenty-five years at the least; that appearances are very deceptive, and what seemed to be a leak in the cistern might after all (we are all frail) be something else; in short, that the cistern did not leak, and never had leaked. You might not be satisfied, but you had nothing to say. This was the way he dealt with me when the kitchen fireplace fell out, and the slates came off the scullery. But, thought I, if there is anything unmistakable, it is 'drains,' and he can't say it's 'not the landlord's business,' as he did when that hundredweight of stucco came off the portico.

So I called on Mr. Pulton, at his office in Church-street, Islington, on my way to the City. I was bland. I introduced the subject as a 'little matter' that would not take him one minute if he would kindly step round to the house. At the mention of the word 'drains' his face fell. I thought I had him. He was very busy that day; he had to meet his wife's mother at Waterloo Station; but to-morrow early he would be sure to look round.

When I got home that evening I found Lucy's father there. Mr. Briggs is a retired naval officer, ex-commander of an ever-so-many ton something. He means well by me, I have no doubt, but he has sometimes a way of looking after his daughter's interests which tends to get my back up. Lucy had told him our trouble, and he was somewhat disturbed, though sufficiently self-possessed to be smoking that particular 'intimidated' I had fondly hoped I had

hidden away for my own delectation.

'This must be attended to at once, boy,' said my naval relation, in a speaking-trumpet bass.

'I'm doing all I can,' I replied, and told them of my interview with Mr. Pulton.

'But you cannot wait for a humbugging landlord,' he ejaculated. 'Prompt action is necessary. No time like the present.' So it seemed with my intimidad.

'But what can we do?' said Lucy; 'advise us, dear papa; I know Tom will only be too glad to be guided by you.'

'Absolutely,' I said, wincing. I had been guided by Mr. Briggs once before in a little matter of mining shares, and remembered it.

'Then my advice is to get out of the house as quickly as possible,' returned papa, 'and then have it out with the landlord. You had better be off to the seaside.'

'But I shall be so sorry to leave Tom,' pleaded Lucy, the darling; 'and it's so expensive, too.'

Mr. Briggs drew up his eyebrows.

'O, that shall be no consideration, of course,' I hastened to say, catching the kindle in the naval eye.

'Leave the house you must, and the seaside will do you all good.'

'But I cannot leave you all alone, and Anne would have to go with the children,' she pleaded, her soft eyes bedimmed with tears. 'But ah!' she said, starting, 'there's Mrs. Hedges the charwoman; she can come and look after you: she's most trustworthy.' I drew rather a long face at the proposed propinquity of Mrs. Hedges—a female who, no doubt, as a propitiation for her sins, went about literally in sackcloth and ashes. 'She's dirty to look at, I

know, dear,' Lucy continued; 'but then she's so clean in her work.'

'Well, it won't be for ever, love; you shall go to Margate to-morrow for a fortnight. By that time all will be straight again,' I said.

Lucy cried a little on my shoulder. Her father said I was just the man he always took me for, and had I any more cigars of the same brand, as his case was empty?

The basement manifestations were worse than ever next day, and of course the landlord did not come. No doubt he had to take his wife's mother back to Waterloo. The day after that, Saturday, I took my wife and children to Margate. I found them nice lodgings facing the sea, five guineas a week; but that was very cheap, as Lucy pointed out, as it included the washing of the table-linen, which in your two-guinea apartments is charged as an extra. We spent a delightful Sunday, and on Monday I returned to town full of vigour to attack Mr. Pulton.

Mrs. Hedges the charwoman—rightly so called, for she charred everything she cooked—met me on my threshold, dirtier than ever to look at (though no doubt clean in her work). Her words of greeting were that 'the stinks was awful.' In self-defence she had been compelled to open (and empty) a bottle of our whisky, and to call in two female friends to support her in the trying circumstances, and help her with several things, the whisky among them. And the drains really were very bad. Of course Pulton had not been, and though I called day after day to remonstrate, he did not come. Meantime, matters got worse. The kitchen was simply unbearable; the break-

fast-room in the basement was little better. Mrs. Hedges and I were driven permanently to the floor above, and meditated flight to the attics. The only thing which consoled me during this time of trial was Lucy's daily letter. She was *so* happy, she said; and the dear children were getting *such* a colour, and the landlady was so *very* attentive, that she was *almost* compensated for having to leave her dear hub. On the Saturday I went down; before starting, however, I gave my lawyer instructions to stir up Mr. Pulton with a six-and-eight-penny pole, threatening that if the matter was not seen to by the following Wednesday, the house would be left and the rent not paid.

Saturday and Sunday passed delightfully. 'But I long to come home again, Tom dear,' Lucy said, as I leaned out of the carriage-window to bid her good-bye on the Monday morning.

'As soon as ever that con-founded landlord has put the house to rights you shall.'

'Have you done what you can yourself? Have you searched to see if there are any pipes broken on the kitchen floor?' she inquired innocently.

'Drain-pipes are not laid on kitchen floors, pussy,' I replied, as the train began to move on. She walked beside the carriage a few steps.

'No, of course; but there's that cupboard under the kitchen stairs. Have you looked in there? Perhaps it's something mouldering: boots or something.' She waved her parasol, and I blew her a kiss, smiling at her absurd conjecture about the boots.

On Wednesday evening Mr. Pulton's grace would expire, and I had a note from him in the morning to say he would be there

without fail at 8 P.M. Meantime, there was no diminution of the nuisance, and I expected every day to be indicted by the neighbours. I started for home early that evening, bracing myself up for the coming encounter. On my way I bought a *Handy Guide to the Law of Landlord and Tenant*, and got quite desperate as I studied it in the homeward tram. The *Handy Guide* informed me that it was the landlord's business to execute all repairs for which he was responsible, and the tenant's to execute all repairs for which he was responsible; that if the tenant could prove legal neglect he would obtain damages from a jury; but that if he couldn't, then he wouldn't; that in the great case of *Smithers v. Smathers* the landlord had been held responsible for defective drainage of a house; though, in the equally authoritative case of *Blithers v. Blathers*, the tenant had been held solely at fault in the matter; finally, that any one bringing an action had 'better be very careful;' from all which I concluded that rather than buy the *Handy Guide* you had better keep your shilling in your pocket.

When I reached home, the charring one, whose work must have been remarkably clean that day, for she was as black as a coal-heaver, received me with a gasp. 'Sir, the stinks is worse than ever,' she said. 'They've given me the hagey'—ague, I concluded—and I hope it'll be remembered.' My temper was up. I scarcely tasted the tea which Mrs. Hedges had provided for me in the bedroom. Down to the kitchen I went, determined to have it out with those drains. I threw off my coat. 'Now for the saw,' I said; 'I'll take up the floor, and Pulton can do what he

likes. I'll be practical enough for him. The saw—where's the saw, Mrs. Hedges?' Mrs. Hedges hadn't seen no saw, not if she was to be struck dead the next minute. Where could it be? Not on its proper hook in the kitchen; not in the greenhouse; not inside the piano, where Lucy frequently leaves the tools. Perhaps it was in the cupboard under the kitchen stairs. I opened the cupboard-door. It stuck a little, evidently not having been opened for some time.

Immediately I did so, I trembled, for I felt, or rather smelt, that I was on the threshold of a discovery. The cupboard was darkness; but from it proceeded a stench that nearly knocked me backwards. It seemed as if the whole of the London 'outfall' was concentrated in that cupboard. It was as though all the sewer gases of the metropolis had taken rendezvous there. The atmosphere of a 'tea-meeting' in hot weather was sweet by comparison. It almost approached the odour of Covent Garden Market after a shower of rain. 'A candle, a candle!' I cried to the agued one. With excited hands she lighted it. I held it aloft and peered within. The cause of all the trouble lay before me.

It was the tortoise. My wife's tortoise, that she was so fond of. Dead, in one sense; but far too much alive in another. You, my gentle reader, no doubt know what a tortoise looks like when basking in the sun; may you never know what it smells like after a long period of decay. It was fearful. But let me, metaphorically, throw a sea of eau-de-cologne over this part of my story. By the aid of the tongs I transported the defunct to the back garden, and buried him deep—

not deeper than my curses—under the ‘popular.’ The demon was at length exorcised.

All at once a terrible thought flashed across my mind—the landlord! When I remembered how I had bullied and baited that man, how I had sent him a lawyer’s letter, how I had accused him of blood-guiltiness, how I had threatened to denounce him in the *Highgate Cato*, and how I had goaded him in every possible way, my heart sank within me. And he was coming even now! Eight o’clock was striking, and there was the sound of his highly practical boots on the front steps! Should I bolt? There was just a chance of escaping by the side of the house, while Mrs. Hedges parleyed with him at the front door. But no, that would be cowardly. I must diplomatisé. He knocked. While my retainer was opening the door, I hurried to the ‘cellarette,’ and drew forth a bottle of sherry and a sponge-cake, as I had seen my wife do when anybody called that she was afraid of. I put on my blandest smile as Mr. Pulton came into the room. I shook his hand heartily, asked after Mrs. P. and the little ones (this was a spec.; but practical men are always largely married), gave him a seat in full view of the sherry, and then, in the most innocent way possible, asked him to what I was indebted for the honour of a visit.

Mr. Pulton looked rather blank. His eyes opened as widely as was practicable. ‘Why, those drains, you know,’ he slowly articulated. ‘I got your lawyer’s letter.’

‘Ah, yes; bless my soul, I forgot,’ I said airily; ‘take a glass of sherry. Yes, the drains, of course. O, the letter was a mere joke. Ah, you’ve called about the drains, then?’

‘Yes,’ said Mr. P., ‘certainly. Here’s towards you.’

‘O,’ I went on, smiling rather nervously, ‘you needn’t have troubled. They’re all right, you know, now; in fact, I was just coming round to say so.’ I filled his glass again, and offered him my cigar-case. ‘Ahem, have you seen the *Evening Stretcher*? What’s your opinion of the news from Nicaragua?’

‘Funny thing,’ ejaculated Mr. Pulton, half to himself.

‘What, you mean the President’s—’

‘No, those drains,’ he rejoined. ‘I suppose the smell went away all of a sudden?’

‘Yes,’ I replied, delighted at the chance offered, ‘that’s it exactly: went away as if by magic. But no more of it, I beg.’

I took him for a turn in the back garden, where he forsook sherry for whisky, smoked four cigars, and filled his case at my earnest persuasion. What he thought, I know not; but he kindly said no more about drains. He treated me, instead, with an hour’s discourse on the use of lath and plaster for party-walls, on the art of piling up builder’s ‘extras,’ and other practical subjects, and then departed. He is to bring his family to tea the Sunday after next.

As soon as he was fairly out of the place I wrote a full account to Lucy of the discovery, and its consequences. Dear girl, she answered by return to tell me how much she had felt for my troubles, highly approved of my conduct with regard to the sherry and sponge-cake, said she didn’t mind losing the tortoise a button, wondered how it could have got into the cupboard, declared she was never so happy as when at home, and urged me to go down on the

